

Numb.^r 6th

I Clough Nov.^r 3^d 1796

H E N R I E T T A,

COUNTESS OSENVOR,

A SENTIMENTAL

N O V E L.

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Pri

H E N R I E T T A,
C O U N T E S S O S E N V O R,

A S E N T I M E N T A L
N O V E L,

I N A S E R I E S O F
L E T T E R S

T O L a d y S U S A N N A H F I T Z R O Y.

B y M r. T R E Y S S A C d e V E R G Y,

C o u n s e l l o r i n t h e P a r l i a m e n t o f *Paris*.

A n d E D I T O R o f t h e L O V E R S.

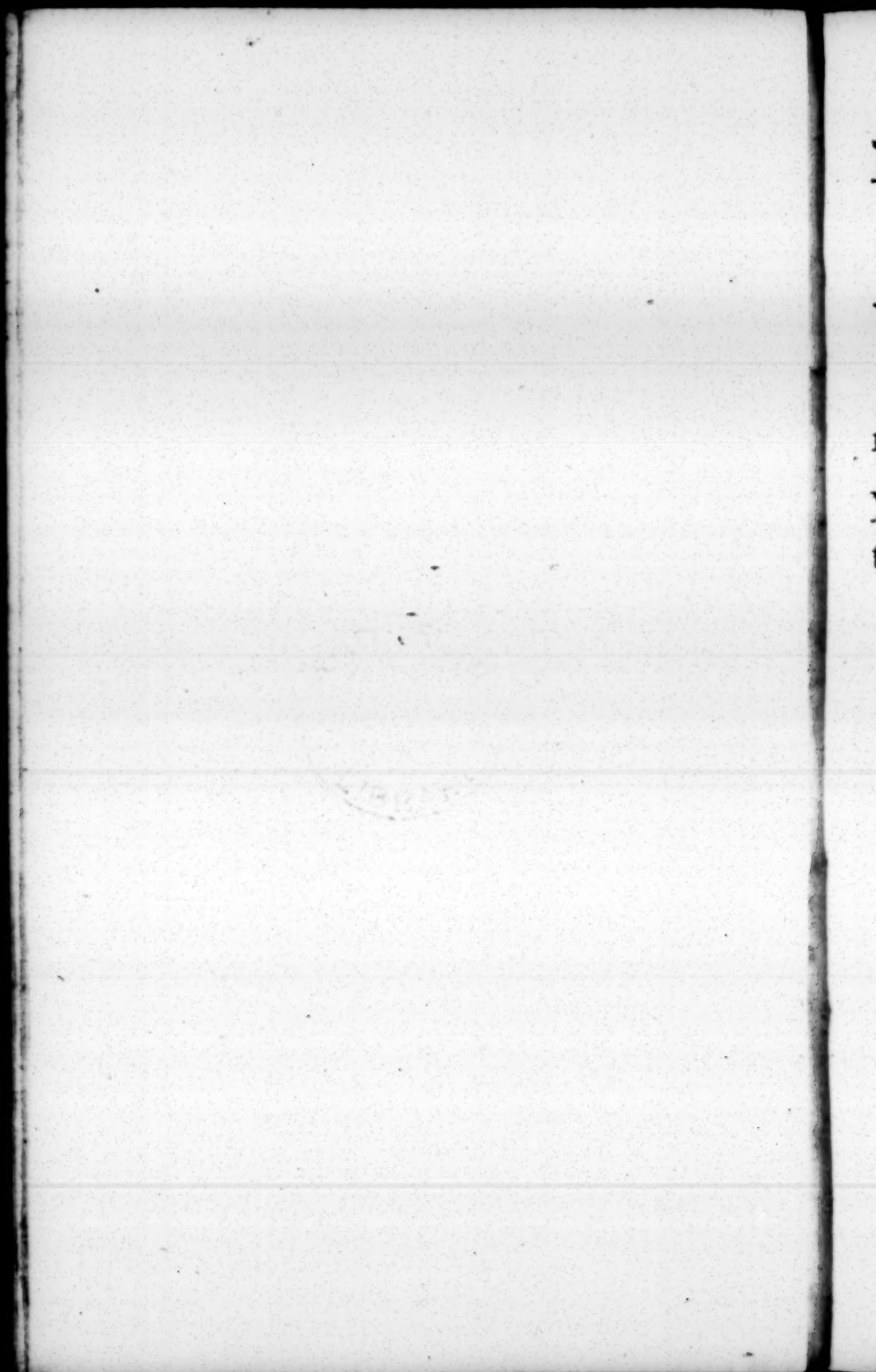
" Love and Virtue held the Pen."

V O L. I.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. Roson, at No. 54. in St. Martin's
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[Price Six Shillings Bound.]



T O
Lady Harr**t Stan***e.

M A D A M,

WERE Virtue, Beauty, and
the Graces, to appear a-
mong us, they would assume
your Shape, your Features----
talk and feel as you do.---

I am,

M A D A M,

Your Ladyship's

Most humble and

Obedient Servant,

TREYSSAC DE VERGY.

Vol. I.

P R E F A C E.

OF my former works *love* and *nature* were the *authors*: they boldly held the pencil and drew the pictures of the *Lovers*. The drapery intended to conceal their voluptuousness making them the more conspicuous; a few fools arose against the performance, and announced it as an apology of adultery. As I despised their judgment I appealed of it
only

only to my own reason, and sat contented with the esteem of the sensible, and laughing heartily at the noisy buzzing of the harmless insects.

Henrietta, Virtue has written, and I doubt not but for that very reason it will be *damned*. Men judging according to their age and passions, I wonder not at the praise and satire lavished by them on the same work.—A woman as she smiles or frowns partakes of its fate; like it she has her censors and admirers—no more than she do I pretend to please all: too well am I acquainted with

P R E F A C E. ix.

with the human heart to indulge the idle flattering conceit. As we feel we see and read—the gay and passionate—the devotee and indifferent having a soul the reverse of each other, must necessarily differ in their opinion of a *beauty* and a *novel*.

Of *Henrietta* I'll say but this—
all the characters are new—if *good*,
the public will do it justice: if *bad*,
to commend it would be ridiculous.



A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

* * * Some time in MAY next will be published the Second Volume of the LOVERS. Besides the actors of the first, it will contain some witty, satirical, and passionate scenes between Lady G—— and the D— of C—, Lady H— and Lord B—, &c. — I'll paint their foibles, and apologize for their conduct— Let others slander and defame their hearts I have not, my only pleasure is to excuse and forgive—I see with a different eye—I cannot help it.

Before the 15th of *May* next will
published,

T H E
S C O T C H M A N :

O R,

The W O R L D as it goes.

In C H A P T E R S and a new Manner.

By M. TREYSSAC DE VERGY.



H E N R I E T T A,
A
SENTIMENTAL NOVEL.



L E T T E R I.

HENRIETTA Countess OSENVOR, to
Lady SUSANNAH FITZROY.



O O cruel Susannah!—did
you know the full extent
of my misery, your curiosity
would die away and respect my sorrow—
you would not attempt to renew in my
heart a pain too exquisite to be born—

B

Ch!

Oh!—let me not call the past to my mind—my soul sinks at the remembrance of it.—Five years are elapsed—'tis true—time has no power over sufferings like mine—it may have blunted their former fierceness—but they are still keen, still intolerable—I have no strength to support them.—You say, I pine away—I know it—what is life when deprived of the only charm which could make it agreeable!—Would I were no more—that at this very moment death would sweep me away!—religion stops my arm—nay, your friendship is a comfort I enjoy in the midst of grief, troubles, and despair—When I see you I am less unhappy—you are to me like a fine day to the dispirited seamen after a night of storm

form—you enliven my spirits, and sometimes force a smile on my lips—but when absent, memory betrays me again into the feeling of my wretchedness—I have then no other company than my thoughts, and these thoughts are a perpetual torment.

Sufannah ! insist no more to know a secret which must be buried with me in the grave——It would be too painful to relate—If you love me, demand not what I wish to grant, but, indeed cannot, without being a prey to the most torturing agony.——Abuse not thy power over thy Henrietta.

Adieu.

L E T T E R II.

NO longer will I deny your intreaties: your friendship deserves a sacrifice—I'll make it—in your favour, dear Susannah, I'll forget myself. You shall know every anecdote of my life, the history of every thought and of every feeling—I will hide nothing from you——Self love I shall not listen to—truth will guide my pen. Adieu.

L E T T E R

LETTER III.

HAPPILY blest with a sensible mother, the dawn of my infancy announced accomplishments which since have obtained your applauses, and the praises of men. Under the care of Mrs. Verman, the susceptibility of my mind, like marble under the chissel of *Phidias*, received the exquisite form which taste and judgment can give. At sixteen, very few were the talents I did not possess, very few the sciences in which I was not an adept. The knowledge of the human heart Shakspeare displayed to me ; his works, and

the Spectator, taught me to think, and to compare. The power of the passions I learnt in the ancient and modern history ; their effects filled my soul with apprehension and diffidence, but when nature began to bring forth their dormant seed in my heart, I trembled and shuddered at their opposition to the religious law.—However strong the impression we imbibe in the earliest time of life, and sincere our resolution is never to alter them, the passions will talk, and silence reason. This truth I have experienced——though prepared, and in arms against the seductions of pride and ambition, I have been subdued, and their slave.—Would I had been born in a lonely cottage,

(7)

tage, far from men, and free from knowledge ! I trusted to reason for the conquest of pleasure—fool that I was not to know she spoke, and acted like a coward—seemingly ready to engage though determined to fly !

B4

LETTER

LETTER IV.

WHEN from the involuntary pantings of my bosom, Mrs. Verman discovered that my heart began to beat to desire, she renewed her satire on man. I listened, but still my heart beat, and the monster *Man* gave the impulse.

Like the child who attracted by the beauty of a rose, advances eagerly his hand to pluck it up, and forgets the thorn which lies under it, we welcome the flattering sensation, totally neglectful of the evils it may bring upon us. Our senses put reason to defiance
—We

—We only think when pain or sorrow warns us of our imprudence.

The frightful picture my mother drew of man, however true in respect to his political life, my heart thought false in his character of a lover. This character, nature formed with ingenuity: it is as inconsistent with falshood, as the wit of Lady *Waldegrave* with impertinence and foppery. Education changes not the real feelings of the human heart—Sentiments vary not like opinions.

Mrs. Verman opposed her experience to my judgment, “You expect, said she to me one day, to be loved for

B 5

“ your-

“ yourself; that the man who will tell
“ you of his passion will not feign it.
“ This error has caused the ruin of
“ many virtuous unsuspecting maids;
“ it leaves them defenceless against the
“ attacks of their ungenerous enemy.”

And then she acquainted me with the character of a S——h, a R——y, and of a hundred more who under the mask of love and friendship, talked innocence into credulity, only to abuse, and then abandon her to infamy and despair.

Such a corruption in the manners of men in the highest life, I would hardly believe: what was I to think of the rest of mankind, when those born to be an example of honour and virtue, were
living

living devotees to vice and perjury ? where are we to look for truth and integrity ?—These instances of open profligacy made me fearful : for a long time I hated the sight of men, and sought but in myself for happiness.

At eighteen, spite of sighs, oglings, whisperings, and public homage of a croud of adorers, my heart was my own ; it was not to continue any longer passive under the load of indifference. The hour came when I yielded to the enchanting passion, when both love and nature springing up a new life in me, their charms silenced my fears and painted man as a friend.

LETTER

LETTER V.

MRS. Verman and I were on a visit at an Alderman's in the City, when a young gentleman of the most agreeable countenance entered the room with the familiar steps of friendship. Lady Bennet the mistress of the house, presented him to us as a near relation lately come from Germany. A salute was given, but not received without a half blush, the natural effect of the concern forced by him in my breast. Never before had I seen fine features and modesty so happily blended—he looked, as if insensible of his personal advantages, and
talked

talked not to be admired, but to please.

Lady Bennet appeared so sensibly proud of having such a Nephew, that my attention increasing in proportion to her esteem of him, I thought him the most accomplished young man I had ever beheld. “ It is not possible, “ said I to myself, that a base soul can “ be lodged in so perfect a body ; “ no, his heart must partake of the “ excellency of his person,—happy will “ be the woman he shall love !” After this private soliloquy, whose sense I took care not to trust to my eye, lest its discovery should weaken the few charms I possessed ; I played the woman, and acted the very reverse of what I thought.

I know.

I know, Sufannah, that too easy a conquest is disdained ; and that, oftener than our beauty, the glory of warming an insensible heart, inflames a man to the enthusiasm of love. All passions are fed only by difficulties—a good under your hand palls presently your desires—life would be a torment could we enjoy as soon as we wish.

The civilities of Mr. Romney, such was the Gentleman's name, were not, for an hour, fixed to any particular object. He divided his attention between two young Ladies and me, and neither of us had to boast his partiality. My pride called his behaviour injustice, and made me resolve on revenge. A City fop,
the

the most unaccountable and ridiculous animal upon earth, mimicking the airs of a courtier, had impertinently leaned upon the back of my chair, and whispered a praise on my person, nay swore he would bett ten to one in favour of my charms against all the women in England. This man whom I had not deigned to answer, continuing to pester me with his assiduity, I dissembled my dislike and dropped a few words which fixed him by me. His dear self importance was so pleased with the distinction I paid him, that in the height of his gratitude he displayed all his borrowed wit, and did not think it lost upon me.

A

A fool will some times be diverting, Susannah ; the impertinences the fellow uttered, had a novelty which amused me : like the tittle tattle of children they were so extravagantly mixed with a few fallies of good sense, that my wonder at that curious piece of folly, gave me precisely the looks I wanted to humble Mr. Romney.

A man, however modest, is not dead to the desire of being esteemed ; he necessarily knows his superiority when in opposition to a fop. My behaviour Mr. Romney felt. The error of my judgment he laid to the account of my heart : he thought me the more prepossessed as I was the less rational. This
idea.

idea deadened his vivacity; he answered a *no* for a *yes*, and some traces of sadness were visible on his face. A side glance I darted at him, told me his uneasiness, and my heart panted with joy at the discovery. Fearful, lest pride only should have worked Mr. Romney, into a reverie and absence of mind, I artfully supported the fop's imagination with smiles of content. He had a fine voice, this he hinted to me, and indeed he exceeded my expectations. "You should always sing and not talk." This I half whispered to him—The man took it for a compliment, bowed and thanked me.

Women, Susannah, are better hypocrites, than the most refined courtiers.

Ambition

Ambition may be easily seen through, their boasted love of independence; but passions lie buried in our hearts, as silent as the dead in their graves. Under the cloak of a natural levity, I concealed from every eye the inclination I began to feel, whilst Mr. Romney's impatient ingenuity spoke his soul in every motion. There I read, "I was the woman he loved." This intelligence changed not my plan: prudence told me to be false, and I continued the deceit.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

A General silence, and a few yawnings having succeeded to the eulogiums bestowed on Mr. Lewis's voice, cards were proposed, as the sole means not to feel the weight of time, the mortal enemy of the idle and stupid. Then Mr. Romney drew near me—opened his lips—and with a sigh closed them again. Unwilling to hear what I already knew, lest my sensibility should betray me, I arose, curtesied, and went to the whist-table.

In

In vain did Mr. Romney endeavour to trust my ear with the tale of his woe—in vain did he express in his eyes the secret of his heart : I feigned neither to hear, nor to see. My gaiety contrasted his languishing looks, and though extremely delighted, he could not dissemble his passion, not once did he catch in my features the satisfaction I enjoyed.

“ So handsome, yet so indifferent ! ”

I turned my head, frowned, and carelessly attended to my game.

“ Indif-

“ Indifferent ! I was wrong—Mr.
“ Lewis is the man.—

Trump, exclaimed I, and I played the ace of diamonds. Mr. Romney returned to the chimney corner, but not, however, before he had complimented me with—“ I have seen you ; I am undone.”

Give a child the toy he longs for, he will throw it aside, and wish for another ; deny it to him, you will enhance its value, and endear it to his fancy. Thus man must be treated, or disgust will follow his enjoyment.

My

My fop, and my discretion, helped me the whole evening against the attacks of my already enamoured heart. Its emotions—guests I never had entertained before—I treated with the familiarity of habit; and not once, Mr. Romney though watching attentively every smile, and every word, could suspect his power over me.

Diffimulation I discarded when I came home.

“How do you like Lady Bennet’s
“nephew, Henrietta? asked Mrs.
“Verman.

That

That question I answered with sincerity. My mother had too much experience not to discover a lover in my praises of Mr. Romney.

“ I own, said she, with a sneer, that
 “ he may, at a first sight, prejudice in
 “ in his favour. Were the virtues
 “ of a man, centered in an exquisitely
 “ made shape, and comely presence
 “ he would certainly deserve the eulogiums you have lavished upon
 “ him; but, Miss, these are too often
 “ the deluding qualities under which
 “ are concealed vice and folly. Study
 “ the character, before you judge of
 “ the man : not to your heart, but to
 “ your

“ your reason, apply for the know-
“ ledge of mankind. The old wo-
“ man, whom you mistook once at the
“ opera for a beauty, so much altered
“ by patches and paint her fea-
“ tures were, is the picture of all the
“ objects before you—the senses are
not the judges of truth.—

And then fixing her eyes upon
mine —

“ As Mr. Romney is but an ac-
“ quaintance, your good opinion of
“ him is an harmless error. It matters
“ not what you think of people in his
“ situation of life, since it is not a-
“ mongst them you are to look for a
“ friend,

“ friend, or a husband. My Henri-
 “ etta is worthy of a nobler fate.—

The sense of this speech told so expressly that she would not favour my new inclination, that I immediately declared her views for my establishment were the more agreeable, that they perfectly coincided with my ambition, and would contribute to her happiness. So easy and natural was the tone of my voice, that the suspicious Mrs. Verman doubted not my veracity. She embraced me, and a few minutes after I retired to my apartment.

C L E T T E R

L E T T E R VII.

I Was no sooner alone than I reflected on the inconsistency of our passions. My mother loved me with the utmost tenderness, yet could not think to see me happy but in her own way—To her feelings I was to chain my sensibility—and at the impetuous season of desires, adopt the cool reason of a woman of forty. A nobleman, for her son-in-law was the real cause of her unceasing fondness——what fondness is that which my opposition to her choice would have easily changed into
into

into hatred?—It was too evident she loved me but for herself. This thought made me not forget the benefits I had received from her; I remembered with gratitude the peculiar care she had taken of my education; to her I was indebted for every quality I had to boast; but was I in her hands, like a curious piece of mechanism in those of an ingenious artist, to be made use only for her personal advantage? both my heart and reason exclaimed a *No*. I could not think to be led forcibly to the arms of an undeserving husband, like the unfortunate victims of the French pride, who, to the everlasting disgrace of humanity, are buried for life in the walls

of a convent. The laws of England are the friends of nature ; we detest the inhuman sacrifices she is perpetually compelled to make in the countries governed by ignorance, despotism and superstition.

I resolved, Sufanna, on attempting to erase from my heart the memory of Mr. Romney—'twas all filial duty could require from me—and on loving, if the attempt proved unsuccessful. This determination calmed my mind, and lulled me to rest.

CHAP.

L E T T E R VIII.

MY first thought when I awoke was about Mr. Romney, and almost half an hour was devoted to him—— I could not help it. The next reverie was on the means to reconcile my mother's peace with my own, and this, to my sorrow, could not be effected without hypocrisy. I had too much virtue to be true at the expence of her happiness.—Besides, I flattered myself that the present advantages resulting from a marriage with a man of Mr. Romney's fortune would overbalance the brilliant uncertainty she fed

her imagination with. From a woman, with whose ambitious disposition I was perfectly acquainted, it was not wise to expect such a sacrifice; but she was my mother—I hated to think her imprudent and ungenerous.

* * * * *

Mrs. Verman took me into her closet after breakfast. The air of mystery she had assumed when she bid me follow her, and the orders she gave not to be interrupted, announcing plainly the subject of her conversation, I put myself on my guard, and defy'd her sagacity.

“ Sit down, Henrietta, and listen,
 “ not to a mother, but a friend, who
 “ knows

“ knows the world, and will not de-
“ ceive you.”

“ You are at an age, when the pas-
“ sions, commanding an absolute obe-
“ dience to their dictates, throw the
“ head into confusion, and blind our
“ understanding. Once the slaves of
“ desire, it is not in our power to re-
“ move the veil spread between reason
“ and us. To free you from the dan-
“ ger of such a situation is my duty.

“ The ingenuity of youth is an
“ enemy to their happiness——Like
“ honour in the man who wants to be
“ preferred, it is a weapon we furnish
“ a villain with against ourselves, a

“ weapon the more secure in his hand,
“ as our hearts are incessantly ex-
“ posed to the blow it strikes.

“ Consider mankind under the two
“ classes of knaves and fools—How-
“ ever shocking this assertion may be
“ to your good-nature, believe it
“ true. The principles of education
“ are never so deeply rooted, but they
“ sooner or later, give way to the
“ maxims of the society we live in.
“ Had you, with the eye of a philo-
“ sopher, observed the actions of the
“ persons you have visited, heard, and
“ conversed with, you would have
“ easily distinguished between their
“ tongues and hearts, their counte-
“ nances

“ nances and judgment. Every sen-
 “ sible man or woman adopts indiffe-
 “ rently the character of those they
 “ want to please or deceive. As vir-
 “ tue, like the language of a pedantic
 “ fellow, is entirely out of fashion
 “ with the polite world, and this po-
 “ lite world contains the very choice
 “ of a nation, we readily assent to
 “ their opinions, rather than to be
 “ laughed at, and ranked among the
 “ vulgar. Thus pride forms our se-
 “ cond education the more prevailing
 “ over the former, that it agrees with
 “ our desires, and favours every pas-
 “ sion.

“ The whole end of this life, Hen-
 “ rietta, is to pass it away in as much

“ pleasure, and as little pains as we
“ can. Fortune, and a high rank,
“ procure us every bliss, when we
“ know how to enjoy them. They are
“ the miraculous spring which washes
“ every fault, and turns foibles into
“ perfections.

“ Trust to sentiment for happiness,
“ no more than you would take a
“ blind man for your guide in a
“ thorny path bordered with preci-
“ pices. Love is a word with which
“ we ennoble the wants of the senses.
“ Did we examine our hearts, and
“ conclude impartially from its long-
“ ings, we should own, that man in
“ general, and not this or that, is the
“ object

“ object of our wishes. It may hap-
“ pen, that a similarity of disposition
“ will cause what they call sym-
“ thy, and fix our affections upon one
“ in preference to another ; but those
“ who are well acquainted with huma-
“ nity, will convince you, Henrietta,
“ that a perfect harmony, like a total
“ difference, between two characters,
“ is incompatible with real happiness.
“ Dislike or hatred must be our lot,
“ when we can command bliss, or
“ cannot entertain the hope of ever
“ enjoying it.

“ Constancy is a forced state, which
“ like a delirium, supposes the patient
“ incapable of reflecting. It cannot
“ subsist

“ subſiſt long, unleſs the paſſions be
“ kept in a perpetual ferment, and
“ experience tells us, that none out-
“ live the poſſeſſion of the objects we
“ pant after. This, the lovers will
“ not ſuffer reaſon to demonſtrate, till
“ indifference has taught them their
“ error.

“ Folly, Henrietta, is not peculiar
“ to love; it belongs to every other
“ paſſion of the heart and mind. It
“ is a general diſeaſe, more or leſs dan-
“ gerous, according as we are more or
“ leſs infeſted with it.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R IX.

“ **T**HERE is a foible in our cha-
 “ racter, which owes its birth to
 “ the establishment of society, and
 “ is more powerful and lasting than
 “ any of the passions we are fated
 “ to feel. That foible is *Pride*. It
 “ begins at the prime of life, and va-
 “ nishes only upon the death-bed, nay,
 “ often survives the horrors which
 “ then surround us, and reigns in the
 “ will it dictates. As a Christian, I
 “ detest its sway—as a woman, I yield
 “ to it. Religion and philosophy avail
 “ not

“ not against the pleasure of living in
“ all the luxuriancy of greatness and
“ independance. The superiority of
“ our charms over those of our rivals
“ procures not half the delight we en-
“ joy in the respects and compliance
“ of a world of courtiers. Elegant
“ equipages, sumptuous tables, costly
“ dresses, and a splendid retinue, leave
“ not our souls the time of thinking.
“ Every sense is constantly gratified,
“ and kept alive by variety, and the
“ brilliant imagination of the number-
“ less slaves, whose only study is to
“ divert and to please.

“ Pride, instead of decaying, like
“ Love, is daily increasing in our
“ hearts.

“ hearts. It knows not the transitions
“ from raptures to disgust, but is al-
“ ways new and enchanting. It has
“ in our old age the same charms it
“ possessed in our youth : Never an
“ abatement is sensible in the tran-
“ sports it causes.

“ The wise, Henrietta, believe not
“ in the reality of love ; but all agree
“ that pride exists naturally. They
“ compare the man we prefer, to a
“ silk we chuse amongst a thousand at
“ *Van Sommers*, rather as the effect of
“ the necessity of making a choice,
“ than of the resolves of our taste and
“ judgment. That man and that silk
“ have

“ have the same fate—’tis needless to
 “ tell you the consequence.

“ Your beauty and accomplishments.
 “ call daily the homages of men in
 “ the highest life ; by them only are
 “ you esteemed at your real value.
 “ Like an excellent picture from the
 “ Roman school, which is unnoticed
 “ by the ignorant, and admired by
 “ the *Virtuosi*, you are praised by the
 “ great, the sole connoisseurs in wit,
 “ talents and sensibility. Your per-
 “ fections, among a lower class of
 “ mankind, would be entirely lost, and
 “ perhaps thought as many defects.
 “ I have once seen a savage shutting
 “ his ears to the most perfect harmo-
 “ ny

“ ny, and heard him say, he could
“ not conceive what pleasure such a
“ confusion could afford. How many
“ men are like that savage !

“ Exert your reason, that you may
“ not be a dupe to your heart. Look
“ on all men with indifference, and
“ leave to pride the disposal of your
“ hand. This foible once satisfied,
“ life is a continual scene of blifs.”

LET.

L E T T E R X.

TH E manner of delivery, and the art of the speaker, convince oftener than the reasons with which he defends his opinion. Our vanity alarmed at the superiority he may gain, is ever ready to oppose the latter; but our hearts are easily subdued by the former. Truth and falsehood are equally credited when the orator talks to our passions, and not to our understanding.

Mr. Romney had not made such an impression upon me as to to make me insensible of the real advantages inherent

herent to titles and grandeur. These I had been long accustomed to consider as the rights of beauty, and my imagination more than once had enjoyed all their charms. The panegyric Mrs. Verman made of them awakened my ambition, and forced a smile from my lips.

My mother, attentive to my motions, guessed the approbation my heart gave.

“ I am glad, Henrietta, that it is
 “ in your power to determine for your-
 “ self. The woman who listens to the
 “ insidious language of passion, like
 “ the religious enthusiast, is a satire
 “ on

“ on human reason. Continue to be
“ cool, and not mistake ^{the} illusion for
“ reality. One error is the spring of
“ thousands. From the emotions your
“ soul is affected with, form not your
“ judgment of them : There are hours
“ when we are absolutely unable to
“ compare and to judge. The passions
“ enebriate the soul : at that time,
“ like those of the man intoxicated
“ with liquor, her faculties are in a
“ total inertness, or in a deadly a-
“ gony.

“ Trust to me your feelings, Hen-
“ rietta, when their novelty will strike
“ you ; I will then tell you their na-
“ ture, and administer their antidote.
“ A dis-

“ A distemper though never so bad, is
“ easily removed, when at its first ap-
“ pearance a skilful physician is called;
“ but if we leave the cure to time, or
“ our own abilities, it makes such a
“ progress as to defy art and experi-
“ ence.

LET-

L E T T E R X I.

MY inclination for Mr. Romney, Sufannah, engaged not upon equal terms with my self love : As readily did I at last acknowledge the authority of Mrs. Verman's counsels, as if he had been an absolute stranger to me. No resistance of any moment was made ; although the first onset had announced victory, it was not supported, and my mother's triumph was compleat. I blushed at the surprize of my senses, and told her the power of their illusions over my judgment.

“ I wonder not, Henrietta, at your
 “ having been moved by the presence
 of

“ of an handsome man. Beauty in
“ both sexes has irresistible charms :
“ the sensation it gives are as pleasing
“ as natural—But it is like a rose we
“ smell—like a melodious voice we
“ hear : whilst we breathe the perfume
“ or listen, we forget the thorn, and
“ want of taste.”

“ I do not intend to make the satire
“ of Mr. Romney ; he may possess as
“ noble a soul as his shape is excellent,
“ be endowed with every virtue, and
“ deserving of your love and esteem ;
“ but he may also be the reverse of
“ what I suppose him to be. Were I
“ to judge of him from the education
“ he has received, and the unexpected
“ turn

“ turn of fortune, which made his fa-
 “ ther rich, and enables him to gratify
 “ every call of his passions, I might
 “ without injuring his character, be
 “ prejudiced against him. He looks
 “ grave and sedate, it is true, but no
 “ mien whatever is a proof of our wis-
 “ dom and morality. The real inclina-
 “ tions of men and women I do not
 “ search for in their air, since fashion
 “ and want have made us a ne-
 “ cessity of being false. You will tell
 “ me that Mr. Romney not having been
 “ brought up within the atmosphere of
 “ St. James’s, he has not perhaps adopt-
 “ ed the polite vices of a courtier. It
 “ is an error, Henrietta. These vices
 “ are not the property of the great.
 Their

“ Their refinements, I own, nobody has
“ but themselves. None with such a
“ good grace will tell a lie, will caress
“ a man into the belief of their friend-
“ ship whilst they solicit his disgrace,
“ and pant for pleasures they cannot
“ enjoy without violating the laws, or
“ driving a whole family to despair:
“ these advantages * are the effects of a
“ long habit, and the noble assurance pe-
“ culiar to high birth and power. If you
“ except the heroism of being openly

D

“ a

* Like me the reader must take this for a satire rather than for Mrs. Verman's real opinion: though seemingly in earnest, she had too much sense not to know the errors she commended. Had she painted them to her daughter under their true colours, she would not have acted the part, she wanted to perform.

“ a deist, a libertine, and an adulterer,
“ you will find that almost every indi-
“ vidual in the society, is tainted with
“ the same vices and follies. Fear
“ hides the corrupted heart of a com-
“ moner ; to that only you may ascribe
“ the appearance of more virtue in the
“ Citizen than in the man of the world.
“ Since then, Henrietta, you cannot
“ flatter yourself to know the man of
“ true honour amongst a thousand
“ hypocrites ; would you hesitate in
“ the choice of an husband ? With the
“ great you will be censured but re-
“ spected ; the spleen of the plebian
“ raised by their superiority over him,
“ never goes so far as to annihilate his fer-
“ vility : he murmurs, shakes his chain
but

“ but continues the slave. A false step
 “ in a woman of the City, exposes her
 “ to contempt and misery, in a Lady,
 “ it is called gallantry, and announces
 “ to the public her beauty and merit.
 “ For one husband unfashionable enough
 “ to take the alarm and sue for a
 “ divorce, hundreds laugh at a dis-
 “ grace they could not avoid, or seem
 “ not to know it. An amiable com-
 “ panion rather than a faithful wife, is
 “ the taste of the great. Sensible that
 “ sentiment has its ebb and flow, they
 “ do not require a constancy, which
 “ their reason proves them to be a chi-
 “ mera, the hobby-horse of the fools,
 “ and humble tradesmen. Such an en-
 “ lightened indifference you cannot ex-

“ peet from the latter : their base born
“ souls are entirely taken up with the
“ ideas of order and decency, which
“ among the polite are but as many in-
“ centives to enjoy.

“ Your virtue, Henrietta, needs not
“ this picture to determine your choice
“ in favour of men of quality ; I am
“ conscious you detest the thought of
“ ever abusing the man you will bless
“ with your hand, but what in one hour
“ appears impossible to happen, may
“ in the next by the power of circum-
“ stances come to pass. Did a young
“ man of a generous disposition think
“ he would rob at fifty his countrymen
“ of several millions ? No : it is for-
tune’s

“ tune’s fault. The temptations the
“ laid before him were too strong for
“ his virtue: he could not possibly re-
“ sist, and therefore turned a plunder-
“ er and a villain. 3

“ No man, no woman, premeditates
“ a crime in cool blood; so long as we
“ reason we abhor it, but when passion
“ takes the sway it loses all its horrors,
“ and ten to one we commit it. Like
“ the talents of a general which are not
“ generally esteemed before he meets
“ and defeats an enemy as brave as
“ himself, our virtues are absolutely
“ unknown till we have opposed the
“ seductions of desire and conquered.

L E T T E R XII.

THE maxims of Mrs. Verman, though most of them the contrast of her conduct and of my way of thinking, pleased my mind, and obliterated the charms of Mr. Romney. So cool were her contempt of the citizen, and her esteem of the great, that my theory in the knowledge of mankind yielded readily to the authority of her practical experience. How could I mistrust her assertions, when the life she had led among the different classes of men had needs taught her their real worth?

Books

Books tell not the passions of men so well as a constant intercourse with them: a few days of familiar conversation betray a heart which the history of its feelings does not always unfold. Too often does an author mistake his own affections for those of the personages, he gives a part to perform in the novel he writes; too often is he a slave to prejudice, and draws a false picture. For one *Montesquieu* who composes for the man of all nations, how many only for the society they live in! The same partiality which guides the pen of political writers you easily discover in those of the memoirs which are daily published: To them both might be justly ap-

plied the following French line for a device,

Hors nous et nos amis, nul n'aura de Mérite.

My mother's conversation restored the calm to my heart. If I thought of Mr. Romney it was only with the half pleasure we feel at the second sight of a fine perspective, or the repetition of a *bon-mot*. Lest, however, his presence should revive the past illusion, and wheedle me out of the hopes of a grandeur I flattered myself to enjoy one day, I resolved on not seeing him. A tender woman should never suffer the visits of the man she fears, when her
reason

reason is weak enough to dissemble the reality of the danger she runs. Nature is not an enemy to be easily conquered : she laughs at our boasted prudence, and often defeats it at the very minute we are the more certain of our triumph. I trusted not to reason for victory, but desired my mother to prevent by her care the return of a sentiment, which, as I had once indulged it, might again be welcome to my heart.

D;

LET

L E T T E R. XIII.

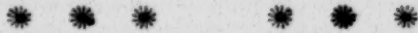
MY confidence in Mrs. Verman
 endeared me to her; she no longer
 saw in me the child she had born,
 but the woman she had educated.
 Like a lump of clay, which the art of
 the sculptor metamorphoses into a Ve-
 nus, from her I had received a form
 which showed the merit of the artist.
 I was a work her reason only had to
 boast: her empire over my mind flat-
 tered her the more that she affected to
 have none over my person.

“ I abjure the power which nature
 “ and the laws have given me over
 “ you ;”

“ you,” Had she told me when the solidity of my judgment answered for my discretion. “ I will direct your choice but never force mine upon you.”

Thus, Sufannah, by seemingly leaving me to myself, she had artfully disposed my heart to feel agreeably to her dictates, and not to perceive that I acted as she pleased. The art of an orator is to arm the passions one against another, and appear rather to adopt the opinion of his auditors than to establish his own. Whoever knows how to flatter our pride is the master of our affection: at his voice, vice and virtue, wisdom and folly change their nature,
and

and obtain alternately our esteem or contempt.



Some days passed without my hearing from Mr. Romney. I'll own to you, that I was not a little piqued at the indifference of a man whom I had thought deeply enamoured of me. My pride hated to reflect on the mistake I had made, and far from welcoming this new remedy against him, I was heartily vexed he himself had furnished me with it. However, determined not to love, I could not help wishing for his tendernefs: his insensibility was a disgrace to my charms. When their power is in question, Susannah, what woman

man will not resent the affront and meditate a revenge ?

“ I will lay all the illusions of beauty
 “ in ambush for him, and when his
 “ heart has surrendered, treat it with
 “ all the haughtiness of an offended
 “ conqueror ; from me he shall have
 “ no mercy ; he shall suffer all the tortures of an unhappy passion.”

These counsels of my indignation I concealed from Mrs. Verman, lest she should point to me the danger attached to the attempt, and dissuade me from it. More than one indiscreet vain maid has lost her liberty, and been chained with the fetters she destined to
 the

the rebel or insensible. That truth
glanced on my mind ; there nothing
could penetrate and fix but the means
of gratifying my pride and assuring my
success.

LET-

L E T T E R X I V .

MRS. Verman and I were walking in Richmond Park, when at the turning of an avenue we met with Lady Bennet. The first cast of my eyes was in favour of her nephew: I looked for him, and saw him not. We had not been long with Lady Bennet, before she whispered me——

“ How chagrined Mr. Romney will
 “ be, not to have attended me to
 “ Richmond, when he hears you was
 “ there ! I am certain that the plea-
 “ sures

“ fures he has been defired to partake
“ at Hampstead will not compenfate
“ for the lofs of your company.

“ At his age, Madam, that lofs is
“ infenfible. Young men, in the
“ midft of their amusements, think
“ not of another happinefs. Very
“ eafily can he find a woman more a-
“ greeable and entertaining : the affu-
“ rance of the contrary is only a com-
“ pliment paid to vanity, mere fashio-
“ nable words, on which reafon fets no
“ value.

“ Indeed, Mifs, you wrong my ne-
“ phew. His good fenfe fcorns to tell
“ what he does ~~not~~ think ; never will
“ he

“ he sacrifice truth to the honour of
“ passing for a polite man. He told
“ me of his love for you ; I answer for
“ his veracity.—

“ Of his love for me ! ah—ah—ah !
“ This jest I did not expect from you,
“ my Lady.—

“ I am in earnest, Miss ; and if your
“ heart has no objection, his hand is at
“ your commands.—

“ These words confirm the jest, Ma-
“ dam. What man of any prudence
“ would so quickly determine for ma-
“ trimony with a woman whose incli-
“ nations he is hardly acquainted with—

“ Ven-

“ Venture the happiness of his whole
“ life to gratify a caprice? The man
“ who submits not his tastes to the ex-
“ amination of his judgment is not a
“ husband for me. Levity in a busi-
“ ness of so great a moment shows not
“ Mr. Romney to his advantage: he
“ is too prudent to consult but his fan-
“ cy in the choice of his wife.—

“ He is enchanted with your beau-
“ ty, and I have convinced him of
“ your virtues.—

“ Talk no more, talk no more.—

And with a smile I put my hand on
her lips, and joined Mrs. Verman.

L E T-

L E T T E R X V .

SO easy a conquest, my Lady, no longer flattered my vanity. My indignation subsided ; and had Mr. Romney appeared then before us, I would have received him with the killing gaiety of indifference.

Lady Bennet attempted a second whisper : I turned my ear.

“ Listen to me——

And she took me by the hand.

“ Well,

“ Well, what have you to say, dear
“ Madam ?——

“ Think of my nephew. You can-
“ not be insensible to his passion for
“ you—Can you ?

“ Pray, Madam, spare me the re-
“ petition of that nonsense. I am
“ free, absolutely free, and leave the
“ disposal of my hand to my mother.—

“ To you only will he be indebted
“ for it—your mother’s consent is but
“ an accessory to his happiness. What
“ would her consent avail a man of de-
“ licacy, were yours to be influenced
“ by

“ by it ? Freely, return love for love.
“ —My nephew is charming ; he has
“ wit, riches, and generosity. With
“ him, every wish you may form shall
“ be satisfied—he will breathe but to
“ please, and make you supremely
“ happy—he has seen you but once—
“ But can you from hence question
“ his sincerity ?—Reflect on yourself,
“ and consult not your modesty——
“ Are not you now conscious he must
“ love ?——

What a dangerous flatterer this Lady
Bennet ! Such an art in a Knight's
wife ! I know not what reply I would
have made, had not Mrs. Verman called
for me.—I instantly tripp'd to her, and
the

the glow which Lady Bennet had raised on my cheek retreated into my heart.

No more did I leave my mother, and lend my ears to the too eloquent persuasive tongue of Lady Bennet.— One minute however she found, as we left the park, to press my hand, and enforce her action with the following words :

“ The more I know you, the more
“ I wish you for my niece. My poor
“ nephew ! how he loves you ! would
“ you believe it, your heart would
“ melt with sympathy, and——

I curtesied, and stepped into the coach.

L E T-

L E T T E R XVI.

THE certainty of my triumph destroyed all the merit of Mr. Romney. I compared him to a beautiful decoration, which pleases the eye and affects not the soul, though, 'till it vanishes, every sense seems to enjoy.— When this mistake in our sensations warms a head in favour of an object, the heart catches necessarily the distemper, and feels pleasurably under the delusions of a prepossessed fancy. A doctor infatuated with an error defends it with all the fire and eloquence of a devotee to truth. We all are that doctor.

“doctor—who among mankind can say he knows himself, and acts according to reason?”

“ I love not,” said I to my mother
“ when we sat in the coach, “ I love
“ not : had not Lady Bennet con-
“ vinced me of her nephew’s attach-
“ ment to me, I might have endan-
“ gered my liberty from too eager a
“ desire of captivating him. He is
“ mine ; no longer am I his.”

And then I related her the project I had formed.

“ True, woman !” exclaimed she, in tapping her fan upon my shoulder ;
“ true,

“ true, woman ! we never make use
“ of our understanding but when in
“ no need of it.”

To compleat my cure, Mrs. Verman
proposed to slip the remainder of the
evening at Lady B——y’s rout.

“ There, Henrietta, in the amaze-
“ ment which the diversity of many
“ hundred characters will cause, you
“ will lose the idea of Mr. Romney—
“ Be not offended at the public, pri-
“ vate, or familiar homage which men
“ will pay to your charms, and at the
“ loud whisperings which envy or ill-
“ nature will force from the women
“ against you. Have no ears in the
E “ polite

“ polite world, and move your eyes
“ but to applaud.

“ The art of using our organs is of
“ the greatest importance, and it
“ should be the principal part of our
“ education : But the ignorant low
“ wretches intrusted with it, like a
“ painter’s boy, whose sole study is to
“ prepare the colours, leave to genius
“ and experience the finishing of our
“ minds. A man of fortune lavishes
“ thousands of pounds a year upon
“ horses and furniture, and grudges a
“ few hundreds for perfecting the rea-
“ son of his children. Instead of
“ chusing a governor among the adepts
“ in the science of the world, he picks
“ up

“ up a base-born fellow, whose whole,
 “ understanding is confined to the o-
 “ pinions of the university he has lived
 “ in. This is the spring of most of
 “ the imprudences young men are
 “ guilty of at their first appearance
 “ into society. Like an extensive,
 “ thick-set, unfrequented forest, which
 “ offers no retreat to the bewildered
 “ traveller against the attacks of the
 “ wild beasts, the stage of the un-
 “ known social life has no asylum for
 “ an innocent heart against falsehood
 “ and perfidy. Youth, taught only
 “ what they ought not to believe or
 “ practise, must needs be a prey to er-
 “ rors, vice and folly.

“ The education of the women,
“ Henrietta, is still more unenlighten-
“ ed. The modern plans are the full
“ measure of stupidity, the fittest I
“ ever knew or heard of to turn a
“ head and corrupt a heart. A virgin,
“ at fifteen is no less a wonder to me
“ than a discreet man at eighteen—
“ The existence of these two beings
“ is as inconsistent with the manner
“ they are brought up, as ambition
“ with an absolute want of talents.”



We were then within a few yards
of Lady B——y's house. An hundred
carriages announcing a numerous as-
sembly, though elegantly dressed, and
of

of a form to be admired, I felt a fear,
and as instantly a colouring declared it
to Mrs. Verman.

“ As Lady B——y’s rout is the ren-
“ dezvous of almost all the people of
“ fashion, and ’tis the first time you
“ venture among such a number of
“ them, I owe you one advice.

“ Blush not when you enter the a-
“ partments, but present yourself with
“ the ease of a woman habituated to
“ act in the brilliant scenes of life.
“ Were they to perceive the smallest
“ alteration in your features, diffidence
“ in your steps, and confusion in the
“ compliments you will pay or return,

“ their pride would show you imme-
 “ diately their superiority. The wo-
 “ man who differs in her dress, her
 “ speech and her countenance, or mi-
 “ micks only those of the company
 “ she visits, is considered by them as
 “ an exotic transplanted on a foreign
 “ foil—the shadow of a reality.—Re-
 “ sume your spirits, Henrietta, and
 “ yield them not an advantage you
 “ partake with them.—Your modesty,
 “ you should leave in the coach ; it is
 “ a bad companion among the great ;
 “ it may murder the inexpressible
 “ charms of your shape, and rob your
 “ graces of their enchanting play—Ne-
 “ ver forget that a becoming vice is
 “ much more esteemed than an auk-
 “ ward virtue.

LETTER

L E T T E R X V I I .

LIKE a sensible Frenchman, who never beheld but the borrowed charms of the Ladies of Paris, on entering Ranelagh fixes upon a beauty wherever he casts his eyes, and at that heavenly sight thinks himself in a terrestrial paradise, my soul panted with delight at the first glance I threw before and round me in Lady B——y's apartment. Though I had many times added to the number of the idle and the gay at a Lady of quality's rout, never had I seen the same sumptuousity and

E 4

magnificence

magnificence displayed. My admiration did not however confuse my head—I curtesied, talked, listened, answered with all the coolness of a satisfied pride. The respect shewed me by some noblemen of our acquaintance, called soon the general attention; men and women with the most impertinent curiosity eyed me from head to foot: From the smiles of the former, and the uneasiness of the latter, I quickly discovered I made a tolerable figure.—The spite of our own sex is the best panegiric of our charms: words have not half its expression and eloquence, and it is the more flattering that it is forced from our real enemies.



So

So volatile a company, so dissipated and seemingly more devoted to pleasure than sentiment, made me fancy every individual out of the reach of the passions. "Whoever thinks not, said I "to myself, cannot feel;" and really their language and manners belyed reason, wit and common sense.

Mrs. Verman read in my heart.

"That behaviour and that language
 "Henrietta, which offend your sensibility, are the effects of a refined political. Thoughtlessness is the excuse
 "for the faults, rank and fortune do
 "not justify, and a guard against the
 "indiscretions of too open a character.

E 5.

They

“ They save the trouble to blush, and
 “ defeat the hatred of an enemy or the
 “ sagacity of a rival. Another time I
 “ will explain you the hidden mysteries
 “ of such a conduct, and convince you
 “ of its propriety. It is enough now
 “ to assure you, that none here are real-
 “ ly what they appear to be.

“ But the old, Madam, why do they
 “ play the fools?—The levity of
 “ youth agrees with the wrinkles on
 “ their faces no more than the liberti-
 “ nism of a Bishop with the sanctity of
 “ his station. Their airs and their age
 “ are the most incompatible things I
 “ ever saw : their union is a most vio-
 “ lent satire of reason and decency—I
 wish

“ with I had not beheld the odious
 “ spectacle.—

“ When you know mankind better,
 “ you will take these contradictions
 “ as the natural effects of a social life.
 “ The fear of being forsaken when we
 “ can no longer procure a diversion or
 “ a pleasure, compels us to assume the
 “ looks of approbation and indulgence
 “ —by conforming in appearance to the
 “ follies of young people, we ennoble
 “ and authorize them; their gratitude
 “ gives in return respects and atten-
 “ dance—Thus our pride enjoys when
 “ every other sentiment is dead. The
 “ miseries of a solitude, after having
 “ long lived in the world, are not to be
 born

“ born—We must still see, talk and
“ slander. A woman who has not that
“ comfort at sixty might as well be
“ buried: the torment of reflecting
“ is worse than death—hardly one in
“ ten thousand can think coldly on the
“ past, and be a tolerable companion
“ to herself.

“ Continue your observations, Hen-
“ rietta. This is a school where you
“ may form your judgment, and then
“ be in no need of a guide in the
“ thorny path of life.— I advise you
“ not to show so much wit that they
“ may think they have more than you
“ —This superiority, rather than that of
“ beauty, most women are desirous to
possess,

“ possess, as the latter is the gift of
“ nature and the former their own
“ work—allow them that advantan-
“ tage, and your own rivals will praise
“ you.”

LETTER

LETTER XVIII.

SUCH a group of foolish heads, though the greatest part of them, esteemed the wisest of the nation, plunged me a few minutes into a sad reverie, and caused the following soliloquy.

“ What men ! what women !—this
 “ the chosen set of mankind recom-
 “ mended me by my mother——The
 “ circle into which she destines me to
 “ move !—however plausible her justi-
 “ fication of them, no real worth can
 be

“ be hid under so visible a contempt of
 “ themselves.—He who has merit is
 “ fond of glory and not of shame—She
 “ who has virtue prides not in the airs
 “ of vice—their folly is too natural to
 “ be affected.—What ! not one
 “ thought that can reveal their reason !
 “ —every where the looks of self
 “ sufficiency !—have we then no other
 “ value than that we receive from a
 “ costly dress and a graceful mien !——
 “ People so much taken up with their
 “ dear persons cannot concern them-
 “ selves in another’s happiness—Their
 “ souls must be totally dead to tender
 “ feelings—Love, pity, generosity
 “ are unknown to them—their affec-
 “ tions center in them—in them on-
 ly

“ ly—How can a woman resist long,
 “ the pressing passions of her heart
 “ and the attacks of a lover, when her
 “ virtue is not supported by the esteem
 “ and tenderness of her husband ! how
 “ can this not hate his wife when cards,
 “ dissipation and the desire of pleasing
 “ are the delights she prefers to his at-
 “ tachment ?—Oh !—True happiness
 “ proceed from our feelings, and not
 “ the vain satisfaction of a false pride !
 “ —It may be a torment to be depriv-
 “ ed at once of the appearances of
 “ rank and fortune, but when we en-
 “ joy them, poor—poor indeed is the
 “ pleasure they give.

Then

Then, Susannah, I thought of Mr. Romney. Take my word for it.—From my comparing him to the company I was with, he gained infinitely in my esteem.—I reflected on a conjugal life, enlivened by a mutual love: it appeared to me the only bliss to be wished for—I sighed at the ambition of my mother.

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

THE men were too politely bred-up not to offend my modesty with the tender of their homage. My charms for an hour were the topic of their indefatigable tongue. Never before were my ears stunned with such a torrent of impertinent eulogiums. “ I “ was an angel just escaped from heaven “ for the delight of mankind—the only “ temptation the devil could reasonably “ think of to plunge them deeper and “ deeper into sin.—No woman could “ be without envy, no man without “ love at the sight of so transcendent

“ a beauty—what quarrels, what dissensions I would cause in society !—

Thus, dear Sufannah, was I pestered and tormented till a fine Lady stopped this tide of falsehood and civility by desiring me to make one with her at quadrille.

“ I never play, Madam.”——

This answer confounded her.

“ You never play !—amazing !——

And shrugging her shoulders up with contempt left me with——“ good God
“ what a company has she kept !”

“ Pray

“ Pray, Miss,” asked another with the supercilious air of a new made countess, “ since you do not play, how
“ do you kill the tedious hours of an
“ evening? for my part I would die
“ were I to tell them by myself at my
“ chimney corner. How do you murder them away Miss?—

“ In the conversation, my Lady,
“ of a few of my mother’s chosen
“ friends.—

“ But, Miss, we cannot always
“ chatter.—

“ We think, Madam—

“ You think—ah—ah—ah! that’s
“ odd enough—fine diversion indeed!—

And

And with the smile of pity she went to whisper my answer to every card-table.

The singularity of my replies, freed me from my admirers; they could not with honour to themselves, differ in my favour from the opinion of a quality toast. “ I was truly a very fine creature, but how could I have any merit since I played not at cards, and durst to boast I thought sometimes ? ”—this judgment formed upon me I read in almost every look—some smiled their approbation of me—but none presumed to take my part.

LETTER

L E T T E R XX.

MY mother was upon the rack ; I saw it, but honest pride had prevailed over false vanity : I was insensible of her sufferings.

“ A pretty world this, said I to myself ! They courted me when they took me for a fool, and forsake me when I prove I am not so.”

The reflected contempt they inspired me for them, spread itself on my countenance, nor did I attempt to conceal it.—Ready wit, or superiority of birth, had

had not availed me so much : it gave me an importance which struck these little souls, and gave again a life to their deceitful flattering tongue. Had I betrayed a sensibility at the affront intended upon me, I should have been avoided and laughed at, but my indifference announcing both my knowledge of the world, and my disdain of them, their haughtiness vanished, and I was once more courted and admired.

This sudden turn threw the Countess into no small a confusion. From the bad opinion she entertained for the company, she had hoped they would not perceive the advantage she had given me, or side with me against an heroic

heroic supporter of their invaded rights. Like an army of scribblers, always ready to engage the first genius who dares to monopolise the public esteem, the fools of quality should constantly stand in defence of one another, and with sneers, jargon and scorn, beat their enemy out of the field.

For the first time, the sense of her folly brought a glow on the cheek of a fine lady; spite of her fan, which she placed between her shame and us, I discovered it. 'Twas not the colouring of an humbled pride, but of the consciousness of having acted contrary to the dictates of her heart. This discovery made me her friend, in the
same

same time that it filled me with indignation against the manners of the age, which had thus ennobled falsehood and impertinence to the disgrace of nature and reason.

My mistake of the Countess's character, made me instantly repeal the sentence I had pronounced against the men and women before me—They might all, for what I knew, wear the same mask, and have a soul the very contrast of their air. Does the moral he preaches tell always the real sentiments of a clergyman, and a promise on his honour the integrity of a nobleman? No, not one in twenty agrees with his sermons, or his words: their

F

hearts

hearts are in a perpetual contradiction with their tongue.—How difficult to know mankind ! that knowledge we can acquire no more than that of ourselves—Like the mysteries, they bid defiance to our reason and experience.

LETTER

LETTER XXI.

“ I Must not for the future believe
“ the appearances, but, like a cir-
“ cumspect philosopher, wait till every
“ doubt be elucidated to form my
“ judgment.”

This resolution reconciled me to the company, whom I looked then upon as a particular kind of men who had their own language, opinions and manners, and whose hearts, doubly guarded by pride and policy, never trusted their real feelings to the indiscretion of

F 2

a look

a look or a feature. I went so far in their favour, as to doubt whether their apparent folly was not true wisdom, since the generality of mankind continued to prostrate at their feet, adore their whims, and be ruled by them.

These changes, in my way of thinking, were the natural effects of the different lights under which they appeared to me. I was in the case of a man who seeing a camelion in a green colour, thought it was its genuine form, till he perceived it turned into white, then black, then red, according to the various coloured objects near which it stood. The diversity of the characters of those whom he has interest

terest to please or deceive, is the coloured object from which the great borrow their countenances ; and so expressive is then the figure they put on, that within a few hours they may rationally be esteemed or despised.

Tired to listen, and be compelled to smother every blush their perpetual attacks on my delicacy called on my cheeks, I got up, and after having walked round several card-tables, stepped to that where the Countess played. So much of good nature and friendship was in my looks, that she beheld me without hatred. This passion, as a specific against the sense of our injustice, prevails so often in the heart of those

who offend, that the absence of it in the Countess confirmed my esteem of her.

There was by her an empty chair. She looked at it, then smiled upon me. I understood her, and sat down. She stooped to my ear.

“ I was a fool—forgive.—Upon the
 “ stage my rank has placed me, there
 “ are parts I am obliged to perform
 “ to comply with the taste of the spec-
 “ tator. The more we swerve from
 “ nature, and depart from other men’s
 “ opinions and manner of acting, the
 “ greater our glory, the louder and
 “ more incessant the applauses they be-
 “ flow.

“ flow. Though sensible that our tri-
“ umphs are the contempt of the wise,
“ these are so few, compared to the
“ multitude who admire us, that our
“ reason argues always in favour of
“ our pride; add to this the silly at-
“ tempts of the public, which afford
“ us as much pleasure as Holland’s
“ servile imitation of Garrick’s man-
“ ner, gives a disgust to the best
“ judges of theatrical merit, and you
“ will cease to wonder we still conti-
“ nue to wear a mask which every body
“ endeavours to take away from us, to
“ adorn themselves with —Let us be
“ friends, Miss, you will find me wor-
“ thy of your esteem—to you I’ll show
“ the woman I must conceal from the

“ public eye.—Merit, in the polite
“ world, has the fate of an ill written
“ novel : it is an intruder, whose sight
“ is constantly detested and avoided.—

Her partner begging then she would
attend to her cards——

“ If you despise me not, Miss, come
“ to see me ; I’ll be proud of an inti-
“ macy with you—Will you ?——

* I curtesied to her invitation, and pro-
mised to go.

* The visits they paid each other would have
swelled this work to four volumes instead of
two. They form so interesting an episode as
to deserve to be published by itself. I will
give it to the public some time next summer,
under the title of WOMAN.

LET-

L E T T E R XXII.

“ **W**HAT! said I to myself, as I
“ was going to Mrs. Verman,
“ for the sake only of differing from
“ their inferiors, the great degrade
“ themselves of the dignity of man,
“ and leave shamelessly to those they
“ scorn the appearance of a superiority
“ of merit and virtue! Is it possible
“ that the ingenuity and good sense of
“ the Countess Mortimer should be
“ such a defect as to expose her to a
“ blush, or the secret malicious whif-
“ pers of a polite circle, were she bold
F 5 “ enough

“ enough to talk and behave in cha-
 “ racter ! A torment to a generous
 “ heart must be a life thus forcibly de-
 “ voted to falsehood and folly.—They
 “ look happy—’tis a lie. Happiness
 “ cannot consist in the perpetual sa-
 “ crifice of our tastes and inclinations,
 “ in the frivolous regard of those we
 “ despise, or in the natural contempt
 “ we must have of ourselves. The
 “ pleasures of pride are not a com-
 “ pensation for the loss of the public
 “ esteem ; their indifference of it is not
 “ sincere : Every man, every woman,
 “ unless absolutely insensible of ho-
 “ nour, are proud to obtain and de-
 “ serve it.



Far

Far from healing the wound which my heart had received, the company renewed its sensibility. The despair of ever enjoying happiness with a courtier, who from his circumstance in life had none to procure, revived the idea of Mr. Romney. “ A man of his
 “ rank had not the noble privilege of
 “ being a fool, without incurring the
 “ contempt of the world ; on his merit only could he rely for an honour-
 “ able distinction in a society, where
 “ fortune, unattended by a high birth,
 “ intitles not the individuals to the
 “ airs, vices and follies of people of
 “ quality. When the depravity of our
 “ hearts is not encouraged by flat-
 “ terers,

“ terers, and the insignificance of our
“ enemies, we seldom laugh volunta-
“ rily at morality, and give a loose to
“ every desire.—From Mr. Romney’s
“ real necessity of obeying the calls of
“ honour and decency, I may safely
“ conclude he is the man my reason
“ must prefer.

Certain that the knowledge of this
last thought would displease Mrs. Ver-
man, I took care to conceal it from
her.

“ So thoughtful, Henrietta, in this
“ gay circle——

“ I am not well, Madam ; I am as
“ much suffocated from the want of
“ air,

“ air, as tired of their senseless praises.
“ Modesty is here in a perpetual agony ; it seems they out-vie one another in their attacks against her ;
“ and exert all the powers of refined
“ civility to give her the deadly blow.
“ Though you have taught me to answer their language, you have not
“ made me insensible of the poison it
“ contains. In vain does the ambitious gild the pill of infamy to conquer the scruples of the man he
“ wants ; this soon parts it from its
“ talisman, and sees it as it is. My
“ feigned indifference is an injury to
“ virtue : I hate to be witty on an immoral subject——

“ Few

“ Few women, Henrietta, would
 “ mistake compliments for offences,
 “ and none be so severe upon them-
 “ selves.—Words from those men’s
 “ lips, like a trifling noise in a solitary
 “ place, can alarm or frighten but the
 “ fools and cowards. Wherever you
 “ go, you will meet the same men ;
 “ all have desires, and will tell you of
 “ them ; they differ only in the man-
 “ ner and expression. The audacity
 “ of a beau, and the respectful ho-
 “ mage of a man diffident of his me-
 “ rit, are adapted to their characters ;
 “ both talk as they feel, and behave
 “ as they dare.—Forgive mankind
 “ their errors, but take care not to be
 “ their victim.—Like you I want to
 “ breathe, let’s go.—

LE T-



L E T T E R XXIII.

THE woman of gallantry rejoices no more at the vain attempts of her jealous husband to surprise her upon the bed of guilt, and a prime minister at having secured a majority in his favour in both houses, than I did when I left Lady B——y's rout. My heart free from constraint, dilated with inexpressible delight at the recovery of its liberty. Like the light which dispels the fears of a child trembling in the dark, and gives him back the favourite toy he had lost, the freedom I enjoyed obliterated

terated the odious hours, during which my mind had been the slave of fashion, and endeared to my senses the memory of Mr. Romney.

No longer did I suffer pride to sway over love, and fancy to impose upon my reason. The blind which the glittering apparatus of grandeur, and the counsels of my mother had put on my eyes, vanished as soon as I began to reflect. When in the cool hours of retirement, the soul being not then biassed by the presence of the delusive objects which attracted her attention, we appeal to our understanding from the judgment of our passions, how different the consequence we draw, the sentence we decree

cree ! At those hours the ambitious, the miser, the voluptuous and the lover, may see as clearly in their hearts, as they behold their features in a faithful glass. The vanity of their pursuits, and the ridicule of their wishes are written in large characters before them, yet, though all have the power to read, how few will or can exert it ! we are so averse to be enlightened, so unwilling to sacrifice errors to truth, that it would seem we are, from the moment we are born, put under the guard of folly—reason, reason ! I am afraid thou art but an empty name ! I see ambition conquer love, and love conquer avarice, but what passion ever yielded to the cool voice of reason ! that man is
 feebly

feebly affected whose soul can be easily argued into moderation, whose feelings, like the airs of a coquet, are at the command of his judgment.

LET.

LETTER XXIV.

SO apt is our mind to change and pass from one determination to another, that unless the heart be absolutely taken up with a sensation, none can flatter themselves to welcome the next day the opinion they had the day before. Such a fickleness is the satire of the modern education. If, at a time when our understanding may be modified at the pleasure of our instructors, we were not, through their ignorance, led into a false knowledge of the foibles of humanity, we would not labour under the mortal pang of suspense: our
choices

choices would be as unalterable as the fervour of a devotee, fully convinced of the existence and power of the God he adores. Some boast their constancy when once resolved, I believe them no more, than I would a criminal, who pleads not guilty, in hope his guilt shall not be detected.

I was the next morning wavering still between love and pride, when the unexpected presence of Mr. Romney gave the victory to the former.

Mrs. Verman being not at home, I knew not at first whether I should receive him, but my heart talking in his favour, he was introduced.

My

My countenance did not bespeak the proud Henrietta ; my sight had however such an effect upon him as to make his bow and his compliment extremely ungraceful and unmeaning.

“ This man, said I to myself, knows
“ how to flatter, his confusion tells his
“ respect ; I must reward him for it.”

And I immediately called his spirits to order by assuring with a smile I was pleased to see him.

“ Oh ! Say again you are pleased.”—

“ What sense do you give to these
“ words that you wish to hear them repeated ?——

“ They

“ They have such a charm as to
“ strike my soul with unspeakable de-
“ light— Forgive— but— Oh! Miss
“ Henrietta—would this heart could
“ lay open before you!——

“ I am quite a stranger to the lan-
“ guage of a heart: I beg you would
“ speak in a tongue I may understand
“ and answer.—How does Lady
“ Bennet?

And I sat down.

“ Very—well.—

“ And with a sigh he drew a chair
“ near me.”

“ This

“ This opportunity I have long de-
“ fired for—frown not—my happiness
“ depends wholly upon your smiles—
“ Beggar me not of this minute of
“ bliss—my honesty has a friend in
“ your virtue—A true love can never
“ give offence ; it is an homage due to
“ beauty.”——

I had not the heart, Sufannah, to
play the coquet, and plague the man
whose sincerity I could not question.

“ I thought, Sir, you esteemed me
“ too much to talk to my pride rather
“ than to my reason. Do you believe
“ me so void of sense as not to be able
“ to hear but of flattery ?——What a
miserable

“ miserable opinion they entertain of the
“ young women in this polite age !—
“ Pray, Sir, find another topic than
“ my own person, or give me leave to
“ retire. I am too proud to stay with
“ a man who compliments my vanity
“ at the expence of my character.—

“ Mistake me not : I both esteem
“ and love you. I have undoubtedly
“ many of the faults peculiar to my age,
“ but I detest falshood—Never have
“ my lips belyed my heart, and be-
“ trayed a virtuous woman into the
“ belief of a passion I did not feel.—

“ These are the very looks, the very
“ expressions of deceit—all use them to
“ betray.—

“ In

“ In me they are the interpreters of
“ truth.—

“ If the most experienced women
“ are daily the dupes to the art of men,
“ what innocent maid is able to distin-
“ guish it from nature, and be free
“ from doubt and fear!——Impru-
“ dence and self sufficiency may easily
“ believe, and trust their charms for
“ the security of a man's words—So long
“ as I am not a fool, for me probabili-
“ ty will not be conviction. ——

“ Will not you make an excep-
“ tion?——

“ In your favour?—

G

“ Indeed

“ Indeed, I deserve it——

“ I have but your word, and you
“ are a man——

“ Do you take me for an enemy?—

“ No : but I’ll act as if you were—

“ So suspicious, and you live happy!——

“ For that very reason I am not miserable——

“ What charms are there in insensibility?——

“ Those

“ Those of being safe from the
“ pains of repentance——

“ How can you feel those, when u-
“ nited to a man of honour?—

“ The scarcity of such a character is
“ not a temptation to credit its re-
“ ality.——

“ How severe your satire of man-
“ kind ! what, not one man of true
“ merit?——

“ What do you understand by true
“ merit ? I never heard of any thing
“ so much spoken of ; but it is so dif-
“ ferently defined, that one would be
“ apt to think it does not exist.—

“ True merit consists in never doing
“ or talking against the dictates of
“ one’s heart.—

“ You frighten me.—What! an a-
“ vowed libertinism is the character of
“ true merit! who would not be a
“ plague to society, were he to obey
“ but the calls of his passions?—

“ The natural depravity of our
“ hearts, charming Henrietta, is cor-
“ rected by an excellent education. A
“ man of liberal principles is humane,
“ generous, indulgent to all men, and
“ severe only to himself—

“ But, Sir, the courtier’s creed is
“ absolutely the reverse of yours. You
“ do

“ do not pretend surely to a greater de-
“ gree of wisdom, which of you is
“ right?—

“ I appeal to your heart for a judg-
“ ment between us.—

“ I pronounce in your favour.—

He took my hand to his lips, and
printed a kiss upon it.

“ What avails my decision, if I fa-
“ voured only a chimera? Where is
“ the man resembling your descrip-
“ tion? By what signs may I know
“ him from his mimic? Buffoons ex-
“ cel often in the parts they imitate—

“ think of the dangers to which one
“ error expose us, of the unavoidable
“ humiliation attending our credulity,
“ —who will reflect, and not suspend
“ his judgment, not wait till our rea-
“ son satisfied objects no longer to the
“ choice we make?—

“ Too many cautions, Miss, are the
“ poison of life : we should be the
“ most wretched of all creatures, were
“ our hearts in a perpetual calm, our
“ minds ever capable of reflection.—
“ No pleasures could we enjoy, were
“ we to submit them to the tribunal
“ of reason. Who would venture on
“ the perilous sea of marriage with
“ the view of the storms impending
“ upon

“ upon it? What society would long
 “ subsist, were every individual to en-
 “ tertain a mutual diffidence one of
 “ another? I do not say, Miss, we
 “ should trust a man upon his appa-
 “ rent behaviour; too often is the
 “ shape of a man of honour the form
 “ of a rogue; but let this never keep
 “ so strict a guard upon himself, na-
 “ ture will betray him: if he has vices,
 “ he will forget himself, and be then
 “ the sport of our sex, and the scorn
 “ of yours.—I am a man, therefore
 “ liable to imperfections and folly:
 “ this is no reason why I should be
 “ tainted with them. Let my actions,
 “ Miss, answer for my veracity—esteem
 “ me so long as I shall deserve it.—

“ And you think, Sir, that a man
“ cannot watch so attentively upon
“ himself, as to keep incog. whilst he
“ is pleased to be so?——

“ Actuated by a strong passion, and
“ in the hope of obtaining the prize
“ he covets, the ambitious may sacrifice nature to the only want he feels.
“ —But a real lover has constantly his
“ heart on his lips—his soul is seen in
“ his eyes—he has not the power to
“ deceive. Respect is the characteristic of a lover—never will he, or
“ can he, offend the object he is enamoured with.——

“ And

“ And you love me ?—

“ The doubt is torment—I love,
“ sincerely love you.—

And he fell on his knees.

“ That your suspicions may entirely
“ vanish, here is my hand—dispose
“ of it—do you still doubt my fin-
“ cerity ?——

I felt such a pleasure on seeing him at my feet, that I forgot to bid him to rise.—Both my hands were in his, and my looks told him plainly I had a mind to believe.

“ Do you still doubt my sincerity?—

“ I—do not—But——

“ But——

How expressive of fear was his
stammering of that word!

“ You may change——

“ Change!—no, never, never—I
“ am happy——

At that instant the door flew open,
and my mother entered the room.

LETTER

L E T T E R XXV.

“ **W**HAT! Mr. Romney, at my
“ daughter’s feet!—at a first
“ visit!—What am I to believe?—

“ Look upon her, Madam; Was
“ not my situation very natural? who
“ could with impunity behold such
“ charms? I had a heart—it felt their
“ power—My fortune and my hands
“ are at her commands—Dear Henrietta,
“ your confusion is an affront upon
“ your mother and me—Since she loves
“ you, she cannot be offended at the respectful

“ respectful attachment of a friend of her
“ family—my character and riches are
“ as unquestionable as your beauty,
“ and her affection for you—— See our
“ pardon in her looks.—

“ I own, Sir, that I was surprized at
“ the novelty—I did not—indeed I did
“ not expect it—but I am not angry.—

These last words she spoke with a smile, and then darted at me an eye filled with indignation. She came to me.

“ Is it thus, Miss, you keep the promise you made?—

“ There

“ There, is my excuse, Madam.—

And I pointed to Mr. Romney. The energy of my answer, still enforced by the firmness of my voice confounded Mrs. Verman.

“ He, your excuse!——

She bit her lips with resentment and went from me.

My mother had too much power over her passions not to subdue them instantly when their knowledge would have submitted her to censure, and too much art not to put the most obstinate man out of his favourite subjects, and give a conversation the turn she liked the best.

In

In vain did Mr. Romney seize every opportunity to introduce the topics of love and marriage, his ingenuity was as often defeated by her prudence. Tired at last not to be able to put one word or two in favour of his desires, he took his leave fully convinced that if he had my consent he could not flatter himself with that of my mother.

LET-

L E T T E R XXVI.

SOON after Mr. Romney's retreat, Mrs. Verman's political indifference dwindled into a downright anger. Her sacrifice of this passion made it but the fiercer when she could indulge it. The bad man is not so heartily incensed at the honours conferred upon his enemy, as she was at the thought her reason had been the sport of my hypocrisy. Her offended pride made her for some time forget the miscarriage of her favourite plan. She could not bear having been the fool of a daughter, whose inclinations she fancied to have
at

at her disposal. To see me act contrarily to her expectation, was an assault on her judgment she could not forgive. All this she expressed with looks, motions and words. "No longer was I her beloved Henrietta, but a base, ungrateful, unnatural wretch, whom she had nursed up like a tender friend, to be the most effectually robbed of her happiness, and stabbed to the heart."

Conscious I had not done any thing I ought to repent or blush for, I sat silent, and with all the intrepidity of innocence. The calm of my spirits raised her passion to a higher degree. "My insensibility of her wrongs was a keener injury than my dissimulation ; this
might

might be the effect of fear, but the former could only be caused by indifference or hatred."

Had I then attempted my defence, like the pilot who would sail against the tide and wind, the utmost efforts of art and ingenuity would have proved unsuccessful. As well might I have told a young widow, enchanted at the death of an abhorred husband, she should regret his loss, and be a prey to sorrow, than to have hoped to convince my mother of the reasonableness of my attachment to Mr. Romney, and the absurdity of her charge against me. I waited till she had absolutely lost the power of speech, and
of

of expressing in her features a violent affection of the soul. So uncommon a flood of fury could not continue: the delicacy of her frame could not long labour under the destroying sensation: the moment came, when, between a half breathing and fainting, she forcibly abandoned to me her ears and her reason.

I told her of the force of the circumstances—she shook her head with contempt—of the good qualities and fortune of Mr. Romney, which would satisfy even the ambition or sensibility of a girl my superior in birth, or accomplishments.

“ Weak

“ Weak girl!—weak girl!—

And she put her hands upon her eyes.

“ What happiness, dear Madam, can
“ your daughter promise herself with
“ a nobleman who will love her but
“ so long as her charms shall please
“ his fancy, and scorn her from the
“ hour the novelty being vanished, he
“ will repent the choice he made?—
“ Love may for a while silence pride
“ and ambition, but when its illusions
“ are passed, will not the once favourite
“ inclination be cursed as the cause of
“ endless shame and sorrow?—If the
“ good

“ good nature of an husband does not
 “ permit him to declare his thoughts
 “ openly, does not the discerning self-
 “ love of his wife trace them in his
 “ behaviour? What woman of any de-
 “ licacy can tamely suffer the dislike
 “ of her husband? Dislike! rather
 “ should I have said his contempt!—
 “ What virtue can then be guarded
 “ against the temptation of revenge?—
 “ though a crime, who will not com-
 “ mit it?—In vain should we call to
 “ religion for help against the resentment
 “ of our hearts—the woman—I fear—is
 “ always between God and our pray-
 “ ers—Expose me not, dear Madam,
 “ to a futurity marked by despair, vice
 “ and folly. In an union with Mr.
 “ Rom-

“ Romney, equality of rank frees me
“ from his disdain——

“ Leave me——leave me, thou
“ thoughtless girl——

“ I will not, till I have found my
“ mother again——

“ Forget that man, and I am thy
“ mother——

“ Would you see me miserable?—

“ Thou art a fool, Henrietta, thou
“ art a fool ; leave me——

“ On my knees I beg for forgive-
“ ness, and your approbation——

“ Ex-

“ Expect neither of them—What
“ obstinacy !—I have no patience—

And rising with the motions of the
utmost displeasure——

“ To your room—no more will I
“ hear—to your room this moment—

I sighed, and obeyed.

LETTER

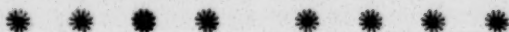
L E T T E R XXVII.

THE two following days I was kept close prisoner, and forbid the use of my pen. This severity strengthened the passion it was intended to destroy. In the absence of the daily diversions which took up my time and my thoughts, my fancy naturally gave way to the feelings of my heart, as the sole relief against the tediousness of captivity. A perpetual reverie on the man we love must necessarily add to his charms and our tenderness—He is not like a castle we build in the air with the richest materials our imaginations

tions can dream of, and whose structure, in the sobriety of our senses, reason disapproves, and pulls down—this is not the fate of a lover: we are always so smitten with the agreeable picture, as to have it not in our power to discern its defects. Mrs. Verman's proceedings favoured Mr. Romney: not once did Reason whisper that prejudice might lead the pencil—I drew, and was pleased with my work.

To these two days of entire solitude, Suzannah, I owe my present misfortunes; they decided my passion, and made me the wretch I am. My mother—but that character is sacred—I
must

I must suppress my complaints, and
suffer in silence.



I was musing upon the continual
divorces among the great, all caused
either by an inequality of birth and
fortune, or a difference of humour,
and trembling to rank one day with
these unfortunate, when the house-
keeper gave me the following letter.

To Miss Henrietta Verman.

When my Henrietta's ingenuity be-
traying the sentiments of her heart op-
pened before me the ever flowery path

H

of

of happiness, how could I have thought I was then upon the very brink of misery ! I had hardly indulged the hope of bliss when it vanished, and left but pain behind.—The starving wretch who finding a purse of gold is robbed of it at the very minute his soul dilates with joy at the delightful sight, suffers not half the torments my fatal disappointment has oppressed me with. Chance may still favour him—that's a comfort—I have none.—Despair only is in view—it reaches my heart—it is torn—exquisitely torn—I wish but for death, since I cannot obtain my Henrietta.

Mrs. Verman's ambition is an obstacle, I have it not in my power to conquer.

quer. Of all passions it is the most inflexible: it hardens a heart, and beggars it of justice and humanity—maternal love is now a dormant virtue in a mother's breast.—Of fancy or pride she obeys the dictates: they are the sole counsellors she advises with, either for the fashion of her dress, or the establishment of her children. This indifference of their happiness once grown into habit, reason can never alter: she will have them see through her own eyes, argue as she feels, and conclude as she resolves.—Oh! dear Henrietta! what have not I to fear!—who will soften Mrs. Verman into a compliance with our desires, if she commands, and will not leave to her

H 2

daughter

daughter the liberty of her choice?—Will not your virtue sacrifice the man of your heart to your mother—yield to her intreaties, or be compelled to obey from the apprehensions of making her unhappy?—This thought makes me mad—no : virtue orders not the inhuman sacrifice—you may disobey, and be still virtuous—The rights of a mother extend not to the power of making her children miserable—both nature and law are in your favour, dear Henrietta—you have yourself rights which a mother can neither dispute nor invalidate—they are as sacred as her's—if you love me, your soul will be as free from her usurped authority as your choice, forgive if I say
it

it, will be free from blame—Riches I ask not—your own person is the only portion I am desirous to possess—my passion is as disinterested as your virtues are real and unspotted—you only I love—any other advantage which your fortune can bestow I disdain—let Mrs. Verman enjoy it—would it could pay for her consent!—but alas! her only foible is pride, and this, not gold, but titles and grandeur can flatter and delight—Henrietta! how warmly she desired Lady Bennet yesterday to use all her influence over me, that I should no more think of you, as she was absolutely determined never to accept me for her son-in-law! as warmly did my

H 3

aunt

aunt defend my cause. Had she spoke to a mother, we had gained—but the ambitious woman is not so easily subdued—her pleasure is her reason——Henrietta! dear Henrietta! from your generosity my tortured soul expects relief—pity a man whose sole crime is to love you—and not repent, though death should be the consequence of the passion he feels—One word from you will save me from destruction, and animate my courage to triumph over the obstinacy of pride and ambition.—Oh! write that word—and I shall be yours.

ROMNEY.

P. S. Mrs.

P. S. Mrs. Verman's housekeeper will deliver you this letter: you may trust her with your answer.—Henrietta! welcome the tears this paper will tell you I have shed—they are the tears of love and despair——welcome them——Adieu.

L E T T E R XXVIII.

“ **T**HOU shalt neither die, nor de-
 “ spair, exclaimed I, when I had
 “ read ; my hand is a debt I must and
 “ will pay to thy love and generosity !
 “ Honour and virtue cannot object to
 “ thee for my husband—when these se-
 “ cure me the esteem of mankind, I’ll
 “ defend my lawful titles to freedom and
 “ happiness. Religion forbids suicide
 “ and falsehood—would not my marry-
 “ ing the man I should hate be the
 “ murder of myself, and the Yes I
 “ should pronounce a wilful perjury ?
 —My

“ —My soul scorns the constraint imposed upon its affections—thou lovest me !—I shall be thine—for thee I’ll brave prayers and threatenings — I’ll not know the mother under the shape of a tyrant, and submit to her despotic sway.”

The last words were still on my lips, when I received Mrs. Verman’s orders to step to her closet.

The chearful features she had put on, cheated me not of my reason. My knowledge of her thoughts told me of a scene in which her heart and her tongue would be at a perpetual variance.

The awful gravity of my countenance announcing plainly that I was not happy, Mrs. Verman seemed to feel a concern, and to indulge a look of real tenderness.—She made me a sign to take a chair and sit by her, then arose and walked pensive, varying her motions according to the ascendancy which maternal love or indignation obtained in her mind. The latter at last prevailed : but that it might not enforce my disobedience, by provoking the haughtiness of my already incensed soul, she borrowed the mien and language of the former.

“ When I condemned you to a few
 “ days retreat, Henrietta, I deprived
 “ myself

“ myself of a daughter whose company
“ and conversation are my delight—
“ this apparent severity my attach-
“ ment to you commanded—however
“ painful the sacrifice, I hesitated not,
“ since I hoped it would avail to your
“ happiness.

Here she smiled upon me, and taking affectionately my hands in hers—

“ I knew that the reason of my
“ daughter would exert itself in the
“ calm of a solitude, and reconcile
“ her to the desires of a mother, who,
“ divested of every prejudice, free
“ from the blindness of passion, sees
“ things such as they are, and lives
“ but

“ but to make you happy. Were not
“ I swayed by this motive, my consent
“ would instantly follow your inclina-
“ tion—with you would I think of
“ the present only, forget the fatal
“ effects of an indiscreet prepossession,
“ and make no use of my experience.

“ Were you certain, which is im-
“ possible, to love and be loved, till
“ age, deadening desire, puts a period
“ to enjoyment, I would still tell you,
“ Henrietta, you shall be unhappy.—
“ If your heart feels passions your hus-
“ band cannot gratify, the days you
“ shall live will be a perpetual transi-
“ tion from pain to pleasure, and this,
“ though never so exquisite, will yield
“ to

“ to the keenness of the former. Un-
“ less you are absolutely divested of
“ pride, envy, ambition and avarice,
“ I tell you again, you shall be un-
“ happy. But you are a woman, Hen-
“ rietta, therefore liable to change, to
“ feel and be deceived—it is with
“ pleasures as with our taste for plays,
“ music and dancing ; who long like
“ the repetition of the same amuse-
“ ments ? do they not leave our soul
“ in a vacuity of sensations, although
“ in the midst of their pretended rap-
“ tures ?

“ Innumerable are our wants, Hen-
“ rietta : their chain is linked up from
“ a real passion to the seemingly insigni-
“ ficant

“ nificant caprice—each has a poig-
“ nancy which brooks no privation—
“ it is a torment to wish in vain for
“ the satisfaction of a desire. You
“ have none now but to please Mr.
“ Romney, but to think he loves
“ you—you shall have the same so
“ long as I attempt to destroy it ; such
“ is the effect of a contradicted pas-
“ sion ; but does not your reason tell
“ you, that this very desire subsists
“ only from my opposition, and that
“ my consent would presently weaken
“ it in your heart ? Through your
“ own obstinacy, would you be deaf to
“ your own interest, and engage in a
“ marriage of which you must and
“ shall repent one day ?—Love is like
“ cham-

“ champaign ; it pleases the taste, and
 “ intoxicates the understanding. Who,
 “ from a thousand instances, convinced
 “ it has such an effect, will trust only
 “ to experience for the certainty of it,
 “ or drink it immoderately, or not re-
 “ move the obnoxious bottle from his
 “ sight ? As the palate is at last dis-
 “ gusted at the bewitching liquor, so
 “ does any passion whatever die away
 “ in the heart of a woman. I except
 “ none but pride, the ever faithful
 “ companion of self-love, which at all
 “ times, and every season of life, con-
 “ tinues to command, and to be o-
 “ beyed.

LETTER

LETTER XXIX.

“ **M** A D A M ! Madam !

And I gave my head the impatient
turn of incredulity.

The solemn dignity of my exclamation, and the sense I marked it with, astonished my mother.

“ Will not religion and virtue secure
“ my peace and felicity better than
“ the power of gratifying every call
“ of a depraved fancy ? You talk of
“ pride

“ pride and self-love as the supreme
“ rulers of our actions—What would
“ religion and virtue avail mankind,
“ were they far from obeying, autho-
“ rised to violate their dictates ? The
“ man who could erase from his mind
“ the ideas of just and unjust, and
“ adopt his pleasure for his only law,
“ would forfeit his nature, and be a
“ monster.—My attachment to Mr.
“ Romney, supported by the love of
“ my duty, will enable me to reach
“ with honour the career I have to run
“ over—Were I to travel it with a
“ man whose only merit should be his
“ coronet, the spectators, under the
“ attire of content, would see in me
“ the victim of vanity here and there,
“ in

“ in search of the happiness she had
“ thoughtlessly lost——

“ Did you live in a community of
“ nuns, your eloquence would make a
“ very brilliant part in their enthusi-
“ astic tittle-tattle——Poor Henrietta,
“ how fallen thou art !—I admire your
“ morals, and compliment you upon
“ your new enlightened scruples——
“ When indifferent, your reason was
“ the envy of all your friends—You
“ love, they are revenged—from their
“ hearts they will pity you—indeed
“ they will pity you.——As I hope,
“ however, that you are not beyond
“ the power of remedy, I give you
“ four and twenty hours to argue your
“ senses

“ senses into their usual coolness and
“ sobriety. Abuse not your judg-
“ ment ; it will easily point out to you
“ the means for a prompt recovery.—
“ If, then, your fit is not over, I will
“ be the physician myself, and force
“ cure on your distempered brain.—
“ Since your reason is asleep, your mo-
“ ther’s must be awakened, to save you
“ from the dangers of infatuation : ’tis
“ my duty, and I will discharge it——
“ I know, I have not your thanks for
“ being so studious of your happiness,
“ that your heart rebels against the
“ method I take to procure it to you—
“ your ingratitude offends me not. As
“ I would not ask a blind man his opi-
“ nion of the dress I wear, in the cir-
“ cumstance

" circumstance you are, I will not require
" you should be just or able to distin-
" guish the remedy from the poison—
" to me it belongs to take care you
" should not mistake——

And with a nod of her head she bid
me to retire.

LET-

L E T T E R X X X .

HEIGH-HO ! sighed I, when I had got into my room, and I leaned a few minutes upon the back of a chair—my heart so oppressed—yet unable to relieve it by the shedding of one single tear.

“ Is it possible, exclaimed I, with
“ the mournful accent of sorrow, that
“ the passion I feel should be only a
“ whim which rises and dies in our
“ breast as fancy commands !—that
“ from my mother’s mere opposition
“ to

“ to my wishes, Mr. Romney borrows
“ his merit, and I indulge my hopes
“ of happiness ! if so, of what use to
“ us can Reason be ? Why does she
“ deny me the help she grants to my
“ mother ? How came I, though wil-
“ ling, not to part a chimera from re-
“ ality ?—I feel I love ; every thought
“ confirms it—yet I love not ! ridi-
“ culous ! I am not so much under
“ the sway of folly, as to be guilty of
“ so unreasonable a mistake—I love,
“ and Mr. Romney is the object.”

I sat down, and took the letter he
had written, read it again and again,
and every perusal added to my esteem
and love for him.

“ My

“ My mother differs from me, and
“ objects to my choice!”——The
thought filled my heart with vexation.
——“ The hatred of a mother ”——My
soul, Suzannah, sunk under the fear of
that hatred—I was instantly bedewed
with tears, and murmured half an hour
against the rigour of my fate, which
had placed the displeasure of a mother
between happiness and me.



Mrs Moulton the housekeeper found
me dejected, in the utmost desponden-
cy, when she came into the room.—
The spectacle of my sorrow drew sob-
bings from her bosom, and tears from
her

her eyes. She respected my silence,
and partook of my agony.

“ Dear Mrs. Moulton—my mother
 “ —my mother—I have no hopes—I
 “ am miserable—she hates the thought
 “ of Mr. Romney — Oh ! my heart
 “ bursts with pain—she threatens—
 “ Mrs. Moulton, she has threatened
 “ me—but four and twenty hours has
 “ she granted to my reason for the
 “ conquest of my passion—Then, if
 “ I continue to love—from her, I am
 “ to expect hatred and ill usage—from
 “ a mother !—who can endure the fa-
 “ tal stroke !——from a mother—my
 “ virtue is shocked—her anger will be
 “ death——

“ Your

“ Your respect for your mother,
“ Miss, I will not weaken—I’ll spare
“ your delicacy my judgment of her
“ behaviour — however uncommonly
“ severe — however contrary to the
“ feelings of a tender parent, you are
“ her daughter, I shall not, against
“ her, vindicate your wrongs—but is
“ she to abuse the authority your good
“ nature gives her over you—to turn
“ to your disadvantage an attachment
“ she should reward, and overlook
“ your happiness to gratify a whim?
“ —the rights of a mother end, when
“ she begins to be unjust—no longer
“ can children be compelled to obey,
“ or fear the sting of remorse for a re-
“ bellion which nature avows.— The
I “ sacrifice

“ sacrifice of one self all laws disapprove :
“ that folly can enter the heads only of
“ the fools and mad.--Mr. Romney will
“ justify your disobedience—malice or
“ envy have no darts to throw against
“ him, so real are his virtues and fortune. Your mother herself will
“ not dare to show an indignation she
“ could not support—although vexed
“ at the miscarriage of a project her
“ pride had delighted to form, her respect for herself will smother it in
“ her breast—her pride itself will force
“ her to applaud what she condemns
“ in her heart.---Be no longer uneasy,
“ dear Miss,---relieve that oppressed
“ heart with the hope of being happy
“ —the man you love you shall have---
“ let

“ let this trickling tear be the last you
“ shed.—

“ Mrs. Moulton, if my mother could
“ forgive, think of the interval be-
“ tween her anger and her pardon---
“ her sufferings my soul will partake---
“ Mr. Romney’s smiles and unfeigned
“ affection will not make me unnatu-
“ ral---still I shall be a daughter, though
“ forsaken by my mother.’—

“ That situation will be but short—
“ what are a few days of trouble to
“ years of real misery? — would you
“ marry a man you should hate,
“ in compliment to Mrs. Verman’s
“ choice?

“ Talk not thus—never would I—
“ so much baseness my soul disdains.—

“ Then you must be certain to live
“ at a perpetual enmity with her.—
“ Does not her refusal of Mr. Romney prove her partiality to another?
“ —you know him not yet, but to-morrow—next week his hand may
“ be tendered to you with the voice of
“ absolute command—perhaps a man
“ exhausted by age and debauchery,
“ without any virtues to commend
“ him to your esteem, but the fictitious honours he inherited from his ancestors—you shudder—the picture
“ may be realized—false pride is always easily contented—it grasps at
“ a shadow

“ a shadow—a brilliant nothing will
“ satisfy it—

“ You frighten me—what can I
“ do?—

“ Of two evils chuse the least. Put
“ in one scale your love for Mr. Rom-
“ ney, with the transitory anger of
“ Mrs. Verman, and in the other twen-
“ ty years of an incessant dislike and
“ sorrow—weigh well—which will carry
“ it?—

“ My love, my love—no longer am
“ I in suspense—no longer will I trust
“ my happiness to the discretion of a
“ prepossessed mother.—Was she in-

“ sensible of the evils she exposes me
 “ to, of the error she so tenderly che-
 “ rishes, and sincerely wishing to dis-
 “ cover her mistake, I might flatter
 “ myself to open her mind to the light
 “ of reason, and be happy with her
 “ own consent—Even then, as her de-
 “ nial would proceed from her affection
 “ to me, I should wait till every fear
 “ should be subsided, every doubt lost
 “ into conviction—but Mrs. Verman
 “ cannot be deceived—she loves me
 “ not—herself and not me she considers
 “ in the disposal of my hand. Like
 “ the voluptuary, who, scorning to
 “ please the taste of his guests, orders
 “ his dinner to his own liking, regard-
 “ less of my inclinations she would
 “ force

“ force upon me the man of her fancy.
 “ —She is my mother—can the name
 “ make up for the want of tender-
 “ ness, and bind me, like the slave, to
 “ have no will, to think but at the
 “ pleasure of a tyrant? No: I shake
 “ the disgraceful yoke, and will be my-
 “ self.—Scruples away!—too long have
 “ I laboured under your delusion—I
 “ will love, and be free.—Dear Mrs.
 “ Moulton, let Mr. Romney be ac-
 “ quainted with the sentiments of my
 “ heart—let him know he pleases—
 “ and I will be his—from me he de-
 “ serves the flattering assurance—tell
 “ him I am sensible of his love and
 “ merit—tell him—but no—he asks
 “ a word — I will write it — fetch me

“ paper and pen—I have been un-
“ mercifully debarred of their use—go
“ —make haste ; I will hear nothing—
“ my soul is impatient of delay—my
“ lover must be happy—who knows
“ but this very minute he curses the
“ air he breathes! —oh! let him not
“ blaspheme against a life I will have
“ him to enjoy — go — why do you
“ stare? have not you heard me?—



My enthusiasm, Sufannah, had passed in Mrs. Moulton's heart — her joy at my sudden resolve had taken from her the powers of speech and motion ; twice I repeated the order before

fore I perceived she was unable to obey.

Alarmed at her silence, still more at her frightful stupid countenance, I shook her by the hand—down upon the floor came the staring open-mouthed Mrs. Moulton. Her fall restored immediately their activity to her inanimated senses.

“ Lord! Lord!—I was so struck—
 “ how happy Mr. Romney! What
 “ news for him!—

And she half limped, half ran out of the room for the materials I wanted.

* * * * *

“ Virtue’ cannot be offended, ex-
 “ claimed I when alone—it is not a false
 I 5 “ step—

“ step—I may, without blushing, own
“ the passion of my heart to the man
“ who feels the same for me—coquetry
“ may think it prudent to be false—
“ I love, I will be true—’tis criminal
“ to play with the happiness of the
“ man we really believe sincere and
“ deserving.”—

“ He is so—he is so—I answer for
“ him,”—said Mrs. Moulton who had
heard the last phrase.

“ Have not I a better guarantee than
“ your word?—

And I smiled.

“ You have it in your charms—

“ Flatterer!—

“ I sat

I sat down and wrote the following letter.



To Charles Romney Esquire.

S I R,

I Have searched into my heart, and found I esteem you — nay there often a more tender sentiment than esteem prevails—did modesty give me leave, — I would name it love—my consciousness of your virtues keeps me from blotting out the word—I have written it; you may read—I love—I will not deny it—but of what avail is my telling I love you to our happiness? a mother—I'll write no more—

HENRIETTA VERMAN.

LET-

L E T T E R. XXXI.

AFTER the step I had taken, Susannah, neither my mind, nor my heart could change, and tamely suffer the tyranny of a mother—from the conviction that my character was and would be free from slander, I grew strong and unconquerable,

I ... The return of Mrs. Moulton, on whose features wandered the talkative joy of a successful messenger, and the sight of a letter from Mr. Romney, increased still my courage, and assured my triumph.

Mrs.

Mrs. Moulton would have made sport with my impatience, but, however agreeable to hear, I could not then listen——From her I snatched the letter, broke the seal open, and involuntarily kissed the first line my eyes fell upon.

TO MISS HENRIETTA VERMAN.

YOU love me!—welcome to my heart are the rapturous words—You love me! my soul has passed in my eyes to read the enchanting expression—to intoxicate itself with delight at the unexpected bliss—You love me!—no longer am I fearful; I brave every obstacle, and defy the most inveterate enemy—

enemy—Oh ! Henrietta, you have re-
 stored life to my dying spirits—this life
 is your work—it is, and ever shall be
 devoted to you—every thought, every
 desire shall center in you—I'll think
 but to please—I'll wish but to see you
 happy—not once shall you perceive an
 abatement in my affection, in my tran-
 sports——Ever eager to gaze, to listen,
 to enjoy, my feelings will have the
 constant fire of novelty.——What lux-
 uriancy of raptures your possession flat-
 ters me with !—each sense alternately
 —all sometimes at once will sink un-
 der the load of pleasure—you will sa-
 tisfy their restless curiosity, and fix
 them upon your looks, your motions,
 your words—and under your heavenly
 touch

touch—my happiness will be too exquisite—'twill be more than a mortal can bear—you love me!—how many the pleasing emotions springing from these words!—a pardon is not more grateful to the criminal condemned to die, than these words are to my heart—You love me! you have made me a man—Mrs. Verman, though never so inflexible, shall yield—she cannot resist the intreaties of a lover—if she does—I have a friend—a powerful friend in your heart—Henrietta! listen to his counsels—he shall not deceive you—my honour warrants the resolution you will form—from me dread nothing but an excess of love—I'll expect passion for passion—a flame as fierce as mine—
I should

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I should be unhappy, did not I see in
your eyes the same sensibility my own
will perpetually betray—Try well thy
heart, Henrietta, and then hesitate not
to trust thy happiness to my care——
thou shalt walk upon the flowers of life,
its thorns I'll conceal from thee.——

ROMNEY.

LETTER

L E T T E R X X X I I .

“ **H**OW rapturously he writes,
“ Mrs Moulton!—how forcible
“ this letter!——

“ You have still added to its energy
“ by your manner of reading it. Had
“ Mr. Romney heard you, he would
“ have mistaken your soul for his——
“ ’twere a pity two such feeling hearts
“ should be parted—they must not—
“ they shall not be parted——

“ God only can tear him from my
“ heart—I love—I love—I am beyond
“ the

“ the power of a mortal physician—
“ my attachment to my mother will
“ not avail her—it fights not upon e-
“ qual terms with my love—this sways
“ entirely over my heart—no room is
“ there in it for the authority of a
“ mother—no other law but its own
“ can I acknowledge and obey——

“ The sentiments of Mr. Romney
“ you have echoed—thus he feels—
“ thus he expresses himself—dear crea-
“ ture!—would you had seen him af-
“ ter he had perused your letter!—
“ he frightened me out of my wits—
“ joy made him absolutely mad—how
“ he talked, and skipped about!—I
“ was nigh ringing for the servants to
“ come

“ come up—he minded me no more
“ than if he had had no witness of his
“ folly, but went on chattering the
“ most strange things, and kissing the
“ comforting paper—thus he called it
“ —poor man!—Oh! he loves you
“ dearly—When he came to himself—
“ What! are you there, Mrs. Moul-
“ ton?—you have brought me life—
“ and he kissed the letter again and
“ again.—Then he sat down, and the
“ *You love me!* was ten times on his
“ lips for once he traced it upon the
“ paper. His heart was full—the an-
“ swer was soon written.

“ Tell my dear Henrietta, that she
“ has made me the happiest from the
“ most

“ most wretched of mankind—tell her
“ I am at her absolute disposal, that
“ she may at her pleasure command
“ my fortune and my hand—that no
“ heart ever felt a more sincere passion
“ —Oh! Mrs. Moulton—

Here the word expired on his tongue—he breathed one sigh—I discovered the trickling tear in his eyes—like him I was affected, trembling, out of breath—what more moving than an handsome young man shedding a tear!—though from joy it is a pain—my soul partook of it.



“ Your sensibility, dear Mrs. Moulton,
“ is an omen I welcome; it proves
me,

“ me, you will be faithful to the inte-
“ rests of two lovers who stand in need
“ of your help—a tender woman can
“ never be false—tell Henrietta to trust
“ to my probity, that whatever partia-
“ lity she may favour me with, she ne-
“ ver shall repent of it—I long to see
“ her, but how, when, where I know
“ not—from her generosity I expect
“ that pleasure—all my attempts, all
“ my ingenuity could not procure it
“ me.—The orders Mrs. Verman has
“ given against me are too positive not
“ to be punctually obeyed—besides,
“ could I get admittance, I might be
“ betrayed, and my Henrietta would
“ be the sufferer—I cannot think to
“ give her one minute of uneasiness—

“ our

“ our indiscretion would infallibly rise
“ her mother’s anger, and perhaps ex-
“ asperate her beyond the hope of for-
“ giveness.—Possibly I am too prudent
“ —but I really love, and since my
“ Henrietta’s virtue pleads still for her
“ mother’s rights, I would obtain her
“ hand but when her soul shall feel no
“ other sensations than those of joy.—
“ Sorrow in my Henrietta’s breast would
“ cause one sigh in the midst of our
“ endearments, and poison all the tran-
“ sports of love—if Mrs. Verman’s in-
“ flexibility continues, then, conscious
“ of having done her duty, Henrietta
“ will come to my arms, without one
“ motive for a tear—then our life shall
“ be a continual scene of bliss—let us
“ for

“ for a few days—a few weeks, respect
“ Mrs. Verman’s denial—no more time
“ will my Henrietta grant, if she loves
“ me—it is sufficient to satisfy her delicacy——

“ What ! you weep, dear Miss ?—

“ I do, and with pleasure at the
“ knowledge you give me of Mr. Romney’s sentiments—how should not I
“ love the man who thinks so nobly ?—
“ But, pray, go on, Mrs. Moulton.—

“ Then he made me promise to contrive an unsuspected interview, where
“ in my presence he might tell you of
“ his love—and putting this letter in
“ my

“ my right hand, he slid this ring into
“ the left—I blushed, and would not
“ receive it, but he himself put it upon
“ this finger, and never would take it
“ again.—

Forgive, Susannah, if I expatiate
upon such a frivolous topic—at that
time it delighted my soul—even now I
remember it with pleasure.

LET-

LETTER XXXIII.

THE next morning Mrs. Verman, mindful of her word, came up to my apartment. The two first hours of my rest had been taken up by love, the remaining nature had invaded. I was still in a sound sleep, when Mrs. Moulton drew the curtains, and announced my mother's visit.

“ What! not yet up!—since Henrietta can rest her mind must be composed. Was she yet wavering between her lover and me, her heart
K should

“ should be awaked—we do not en-
“ joy sleep in the tumult of the pas-
“ sions.—Have I then found my
“ daughter again?—

And she passed her arm round my
neck to embrace me—

“ Stop, Madam : if tenderness is not
“ the real spring of your cares—stop—
“ I may not deserve it—

“ Is it possible your infatuation
“ should last so long?—No, your rea-
“ son has got the better of a blind pas-
“ sion—you are my daughter—let me
“ press you to my bosom—you are in
“ tears!

“ tears !—Henrietta, you will be the
“ death of your mother——

“ To save one day of yours, dear
“ Madam, I would give my whole
“ life—far from me the thought of
“ ever offending my mother !—I love
“ you with the utmost affection—turn
“ not your head from me—to that
“ frown I have not been used—it is a
“ mortal blow upon my sensibility—
“ why should we be miserable, when
“ we can so easily be happy ?—

And I respectfully carried her hand
to my lips——

“ Still silent—still an angry look at
“ me !—is my attachment to Mr.

K 2

Romney

“ Romney such a crime as not to be
“ forgiven?——

“ A new insult ! how did you dare
“ to name him before me ?—the man
“ I detest !——

“ What vice in him has provoked
“ my mother ?—nothing but the fear
“ of my unhappiness could thus obli-
“ terate her generosity—Were he not
“ really unworthy of me, my mother
“ would be more indulgent——

“ His character I do not impeach—
“ he may possess every virtue others
“ boast to have, and have not—but I
“ do not like the man who robs me of
“ my daughter’s affection—that guilt
“ is unpardonable——

“ That

“ That guilt is only a chimera—
“ none ever loved a mother as I do—

“ As you do!—how false!—

“ I am not false—God avert I should
“ tell a lie to my mother!—

“ Let your actions speak your attach-
“ ment to me—they shall not, like
“ words, impose upon my credulity—
“ oppose me no longer in the only
“ point I ever wished to carry—for-
“ get Mr. Romney: to that test I put
“ your veracity——What! —no an-
“ swer!——

“ To prove my veracity, must I be
“ guilty of falsehood, bely my heart,
“ and, to please you, dissemble its real
“ feelings?—my mother ever taught
“ me to respect myself—I will not
“ feign—I love Mr Romney——

“ Presumptuous girl!—I hate you—

She bit her lips, and stamped with
her foot.

“ Repeal—repeal the word—curse
“ not your daughter with your ha-
“ tred——

“ I say it again—I hate you——

And

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And she flung herself out of the room, with the steps and motions of the most violent fury.

K 4

LET-

L E T T E R XXXIV.

“ I AM hated by my mother—from
 “ her own lips I have heard she
 “ hates me”!—Dear Susannah my heart
 failed me—a cold fit seized upon every
 limb—I wished I could cease to love—
 the hatred of my mother, though un-
 just, struck my soul with terror—my
 spirits sunk under the weight of grief—
 I fainted in Mrs. Moulton’s arms.

Her cries soon alarmed the whole
 house—“ Henrietta—the young, ami-
 “ able Henrietta is dying”—the dread-
 ful news passing from one servant to an
 other

other, reached quickly Mrs. Verman's ear. She ran up with the utmost precipitation—at the sight of her daughter laying almost motionless upon the bed, despair animated instantly every feature—she stammered the most doleful complaints, breathed the sobbings of real anguish—when I opened my eyes, I saw her by me bedewed with tears—a prey to the most poignant anxiety—too weak yet to rejoice at the unfeigned tenderness she forcibly expressed—to utter the gratitude I felt, my looks told her—“you do not hate me—nature “ has betrayed the mother”—she understood their language, but would not answer it.—The certainty of my recovery changed her concern into a visible

indifference—I no longer saw but Mrs. Verman, the mother was vanished.—



“ She loves me—yet she will coldly
“ see me miserable!” this thought incensed my heart against her, and allayed the flutter of my spirits. I got up, dressed, and was myself again.

“ I will see Mr. Romney said I to
“ Mrs. Moulton, but let prudence guide
“ the step,—I will not be exposed to
“ the censure of the world—though it
“ cannot disturb the peace of the innocent, it is however a disgrace they
“ should avoid—it is not enough to be
“ really virtuous, one must appear so—
man-

“ mankind are so inclined to slander
“ and believe—Mrs. Moulton, Virtue
“ herself would have the poisonous darts
“ of calumny aimed at her, were she
“ to come among us under her heaven-
“ ly form.—The severity of my mo-
“ ther will have a period—when I am
“ free, either the play houses, or the
“ public walks will afford an opportu-
“ nity—till then I cannot see him—
“ I know I may go to church—Mrs.
“ Verman’s anger would readily yield
“ to her duty—but rather would I die
“ than to profane with the expressions
“ of love the sacred place of worship—
“ This crime though daily perpetrated
“ is no less odious—my heart abhors
“ what my reason condemns.—

“ But,

“ But, if your imprisonment is to
“ last—what will become of Mr. Rom-
“ ney?—he will die if he does not see
“ you—

“ I’ll write—

“ A letter cannot compensate for
“ the privation of your company—it
“ has charms—’tis true—but how weak
“ compared to the pleasure of a con-
“ versation enlivened by a mutual love!
“ could you be contented with only
“ hearing from him?—you sigh—judge
“ of his heart by your own—would
“ you have him suffer when you can
“ relieve him?—

“ How can I, Mrs. Moulton?

“ By

“ By recovering your liberty and be-
“ stowing your hand upon him—

“ He shall have it—but let me first
“ try to soften my mother—she may
“ relent when convinced her opposi-
“ tion is vain—

“ If this hope is the praise of your
“ virtue, it is not that of your dis-
“ cernment—the ambitious have an
“ inflexibility which takes a new force
“ from a spirited resistance—the con-
“ ceit they are infatuated with, neither
“ time nor reason can destroy—how-
“ ever I may be wrong—far from me to
“ dissuade you from making the attempt,
“ —though now in a servile state, I have
“ not forgot the virtues I practised in
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“ an happier situation—I approve your
“ resolution, charming Henrietta; may
“ it be attended with success!—

LETTER

L E T T E R X X X V .

SUSANNAH! Don't you love this Mrs. Moulton?—She is no more—every day I shed one tear over her memory—every day I am sensible of her loss.—Brought up in affluence, and reduced by unmerited misfortunes to the lowest ebb of misery, my mother took her in her house. Although she served, her soul was ever independent of her fortune—she continued to think freely, behave with dignity, and act with honour. The care she had taken of my infancy had endeared me to her—but though she looked upon me as her daughter,

daughter, her impartiality always decided between my mother and me. For her against me when reason was on her side, for me against her when it turned the scale in my favour—Dear Mrs. Moulton!—I will not stop the trickling tear—from me she deserves it.



Two hours had slipped away imperceptibly in the enchanting tittle-tattle of love, when I heard the rattling of a silk, and immediately saw Mrs. Verman. The freshness of my complexion announcing I was well, she omitted the “how dye do?” and sat by me.

“ For the last time, Miss, I am
 “ come to eradicate from your mind
 “ the

“ the error you delight to indulge—
“ your enthusiasm is no wonder: At
“ your season of life, it is in our na-
“ ture to be the sport of the first pas-
“ sion we feel. Experience only can
“ separate its illusions from its reality,
“ by comparing the new sensations
“ with the former effects the same had
“ upon us. I pity your situation, as I
“ do that of a fool or a lunatic—no
“ more than they at this minute can
“ you make use of your understanding
“—it is sunk below the power of re-
“ flecting. Perhaps it is folly in me
“ to attempt to bring you back to rea-
“ son, but I like to yield to my ten-
“ derness, which whispers that my
“ daughter’s condition is not yet despe-
“ rate—

“ rate—yes, Henrietta, you are not
“ yet so far gone as to render vain the
“ remedy I will administer.

“ No longer will I tell you that in
“ the short space of a few months,
“ your affections may vary from love
“ to indifference, and from indifference
“ to hatred, that it is a downright ex-
“ travagance to believe in the continu-
“ ance of a sensation, and still more
“ stupid to found our happiness upon
“ it. Our passions have the instability
“ of the wind: What would your
“ opinion be of a pilot, who sailing
“ to the south, with a fresh gale think-
“ ing it not possible it could on a sud-
“ den shift to an other point of the
“ compass,

“ compass, would quietly fall asleep at
“ the helm, and thus voluntarily expose
“ himself to the danger of a shipwreck?
“ You easily form a judgment of that
“ man, yet Henrietta, you will not see
“ you deserve yourself from me the
“ very sentence you pronounce against
“ him.—



“ Out of the innumerable instances of
“ the inconstancy and power of the pas-
“ sions I'll give you but one. Suppose
“ that jealousy should paint your lover
“ to your fancy as unfaithful and per-
“ fidious—if that conceit grew invete-
“ rate in your mind, I tell you Hen-
“ rietta, that influenced by pride, you
“ would

“ would out of spite give your hand
“ to his hated rival—what is that pas-
“ sion which a foolish whim can erase
“ from your heart? Since you cannot
“ doubt the probability of such a
“ change, are not you utterly con-
“ vinced that from our prepossession
“ only a passion gathers all its strength,
“ and that it has therefore no reality.
“ —A child has fancied a wooden toy
“ —offer him a gold one; he despises
“ it—you are that child, Henrietta.—

Here my mother stopped to take
breath, and search in my looks for
the effect her speech had upon my
heart. She saw but the satisfaction

“ we

we necessarily feel when we hear a sensible orator. I wondered she could hope to silence a passion with words—however plausible the arguments she employed, they glanced only upon my mind, I continued to love.

LETTER

L E T T E R X X X V I .

AFTER a few minutes of a fruitless enquiry, Mrs. Verman went on in the following manner.

“ I have a secret, Miss, which will
“ perhaps cure the wound reason cannot
“ heal—if your disease resists this
“ remedy I give you over, — the Earl
“ Osenvor loves you—

“ The Earl Osenvor!—you amaze
“ me—

“ He himself, Henrietta, is the man
“ who was ambitious of deserving your
“ hand, and to whom I destined it—

“ Never

“ Never did he seem to distinguish
“ me—never did he say he loved but
“ with the accent of a flatterer—of all
“ the noblemen you could name, him
“ I esteem the most—his visits always
“ were welcome—to him without dis-
“ gust I could listen—not once did he
“ offend my modesty either with a look
“ or in expression—often have I com-
“ mended the decency of his carriage—
“ he is polite without affectation, witty
“ without slander, virtuous without
“ shame—oh! madam, you are too in-
“ human in your revenge—indeed—
“ indeed you hate your daughter—you
“ have pierced my heart with sorrow—
“ must the only man I looked upon as
“ my friend love me in vain! why did
“ not

“ not you keep the fatal secret—my
“ knowledge of it is a new torment—
“ I am unhappy——

“ Unhappy, when fortune offers
“ you for husband the man you
“ esteem!——

“ The man I esteem—but him I
“ love not—if his passion for me is as
“ sincere as mine for Mr. Romney,
“ he must be miserable—my heart
“ bleeds for him——

“ Soon he will return from the coun-
“ try—there he went to terminate a
“ family affair—thence he is to come
“ to make at your feet the tender of
“ his

“ his rank—how disappointed when
“ he knows——

“ He shall know it from me, Ma-
“ dam——

“ From you, Henrietta!—are you
“ in earnest?——

“ I am, Madam : I will not deceive
“ the man I respect—’twould be base
“ to give him hopes I should know to
“ be false—since, from me, he could
“ conceal his passion, it is not deeply
“ rooted in his heart—mine, I will trust
“ to his generosity—he has too noble,
“ too delicate a soul, to wish for an
“ happiness I should not partake—

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“ gainst

“ against himself he will take the part
“ of my lover—with you he will be
“ our advocate——

“ And not gain his cause, were he
“ such a fool——

“ What ! would you still oppose,
“ though he himself should abandon
“ his rights ?——

“ Never, never will he part with
“ them——

“ But if he does——

“ But if it should happen that you
“ would not desire it——

“ Lord !

“ Lord ! it is impossible——

“ How then can you expect he should
“ be more generous than you ?—when
“ you overlook his happiness, will he
“ mind your own ?—make not such
“ dreams, Henrietta, when you are a-
“ wake—what could give Lord Ofen-
“ vor a power over his passion, which
“ you are certain not to have over
“ yours ?—I gave my word before you
“ saw Mr. Romney : it is sacred, I
“ shall not depart from it.——

“ Then, we all shall be miserable——

“ Then, it will be your fault, and
“ your fault only.——Were his Lord-

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“ ship's

“ ship’s manners and morals really
“ worthy of contempt, I would have
“ scorned to enter into an alliance with
“ him—but you are conscious of the
“ contrary—you are perfectly convin-
“ ced he deserves you—your esteem
“ speaks his merit—Henrietta, from
“ esteem to love there is but one
“ step——

“ Oh! my heart will burst with
“ grief—I have no strength for such a
“ load of vexations——

“ You know Lord Osenvor—you
“ know not Mr. Romney. Your love
“ for him is almost the work of en-
“ chantment. Like an unknown strong
“ odour,

“ odour, which, carelessly smelt, at
“ once overpowers every sense, his
“ sight has operated upon your heart—
“ it is but an illusion—Lord Osenvor’s
“ presence will destroy it—

“ If it does not—

“ Well—then—I will not think of
“ it—such an effect must necessarily
“ follow——

“ Had you my heart, how different.
“ ly you would conclude! you speak
“ of infatuation; I am not under its
“ sway—I am very clear upon the na-
“ ture of my attachment to Mr Rom-
“ ney: it has sprung more from re-

“ flection than from my fancy ; they
“ have helped one another, and my
“ foul has yielded to their united
“ power.—

“ How unfortunate Lord Ofenvor!—

“ How unhappier I!—he will have
“ but his own sufferings, when I shall
“ feel for yours and for his—Oh!
“ Madam—

And I fell at her feet.

“ Pity your daughter—I love, and
“ am not obftinate—I wifh Lord Ofen-
“ vor were the man I love—to concile
“ my affections with my duty would
“ be

“ be a real bliss—but, this is only a
 “ wish——

The doleful tone of my voice, and some tears which dropped on her hand, seemed to affect sensibly my mother—I heard a smothered sobbing, and discovered a concern in the sudden and quick panting of her bosom—her looks flattered me with her forgiveness—I thought I saw the word upon her half-opened lip—my soul, between fear and joy, was upon the wing for it—Nature was once more sacrificed to ambition—the word was not pronounced—afraid of betraying herself, my mother arose, passed her handkerchief over my eyes, and after a tender kiss on my forehead, went away.

L E T.

L E T T E R XXXVII.

THE sensibility my mother could not dissemble revived my heart, which had greatly suffered from the secret she had disclosed, and the scene that had ensued. Her choice of Lord Osenvor proved her tenderness.—Had she only consulted her pride, neither my taste, nor judgment would she have regarded—the old, infirm, and contemptible would equally have had her approbation, so that her thirst for grandeur should have been satisfied. Had my soul been free, no objection could
I have

I have made—I really esteemed Lord Ofenvor, and had he spoke when I could listen, I would have thought it a glory, an happiness to deserve him—but he had not, and I loved when he would.

The offers of men of the same rank my mother had politely refused—tho' she seemed not to watch my inclinations, she had perceived the preference I gave to Lord Ofenvor, and her heart had rejoiced at the possibility of gratifying both her favourite passion and her love for me. This new light on her behaviour silenced instantly the indignation it had forced into my breast—I felt a pang of sorrow for the injury

jury I had done her, and sincerely repented of my injustice.

“ I have no wrongs to complain of,
 “ said I to myself ; Mrs. Verman acted the mother, when I thought her
 “ only ambitious and indifferent.—
 “ With the world, her choice is her
 “ justification—to my eye, as she is
 “ perfectly acquainted with Lord Osenvor’s virtues, and my prejudice in
 “ his favour, her inflexibility is reason—her experience may foresee
 “ what I think it impossible ever to
 “ happen—“Try your heart well, writes
 “ Mr. Romney”—I will,—and if it
 “ continues to feel as it does now, all
 “ my mother’s intreaties will not avail
 “ Lord

“ Lord Ofenvor—but then, from her
“ hands only will I receive my lover—
“ this sacrifice gratitude commands,
“ and I will make it.

End of the First Volume.